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MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE

OF

DR. DARWIN,

CHIEFLY DURING HIS RESIDENCE AT LICHFIELD,

WITH

ANECDOTES OF HIS FRIENDS,

AND

CRITICISMS ON HIS WRITINGS.

By ANNA SEWARD.

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1804.

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TO THE

RIGHT HONORABLE

THE EARL OF CARLISLE.

MY LORD,

WHERE hereditary honors, ſplendid fortune, and perſonal graces, have ſecured, from the firſt dawn of youth, the external reſpect and gratifying attention of the world, it is ſeldom found that their poſſeſſor has emulouſly and ſedulouſly diſtilled the ſweetneſs from the claſſic fountains. There is no flattery in obſerving, that of thoſe rare inſtances your Lordſhip is conſpicuouſly one. Such energetic induſtry involves a ſuperior claim to eſtimation than where it has appeared the only means by which native talent and laudable ambition could have pierced the miſts of obſcurity.

You, Sir, have nobly choſen to adorn your rank, inſtead of indolently leaning upon it's inherent diſtinction, or even ſatisfying yourſelf

with the acquirement of ſenatorial eloquence. Profeſſedly a diſciple of the Muſes, and on public proof an highly-favored diſciple, you muſt be intereſted in the life and character of one of the moſt eminent of your poetic contemporaries.

Hence, my Lord, do I preſume to lay theſe Memoirs of Dr. Darwin at your feet. From all I hear of Lord Carliſle's virtues, as from all I know of his genius, it is one of my firſt wiſhes for this little Tract, that it may intereſt and amuſe a tranſient hour of his leiſure, and obtain that approbation from him which muſt reward biographic integrity, while literary reputation brightens in his ſmile.

I have the honor to be, with the moſt perfect reſpect and eſteem,

My Lord,
Your Lordſhip's faithful
and obedient ſervant,

ANNA SEWARD.

PREFACE.

In publiſhing theſe Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Dr. Darwin, I am conſcious of their defects; that they do not form a regular detail of biographical circumſtances, even in that moiety of his profeſſional exiſtence formed by his reſidence at Lichfield; while of that which paſſed at Derby I am qualified to preſent no more than a merely general view.

My work conſiſts of the following particulars: the perſon, the mind, the temper of Dr. Darwin; his powers as a Phyſician, Philoſopher, and Poet; the peculiar traits of his manners; his excellencies and faults; the Petrarchan attachment of his middle life, more happy in it's reſult than was that of the Bard of Vaucluſe; the beautiful poetic teſtimonies of it's fervor, while yet

it remained hopeleſs; an inveſtigation of the conſtituent excellencies and defects of his magnificent poem, the Botanic Garden; remarks upon his philoſophic proſe writings; the characters and talents of thoſe who formed the circle of his friends while he reſided in Lichfield; and the very ſingular and intereſting hiſtory of one of them, well-known in the lettered world, whoſe domeſtic hiſtory, remarkable as it is, has been unaccountably omitted by the gentleman who wrote his life.

Dr. Darwin's Letters make no part of theſe Memoirs. Poſſeſſing few of them myſelf, and thoſe perfectly inconſequential, no effort has here been made to obtain them from others. He lived not, like Pope and Swift, Gray and Johnſon, in excluſive devotion to abſtract literature. During ſuch hours of repoſe, compared to his buſy and hurried life, he might have found leiſure to pour his imagination and his knowledge

ledge on the epiſtolary page; but his epiſtles, though profeſſionally numerous, were ſhort from neceſſity, and by choice compreſſed. He has often ſaid that he had not the talent of elegant letter-writing. Like all other diſtinguiſhed acquirements, it can only obtain excellence from frequent and diffuſe practice, unreſtrained by the interfering preſſure of extrinſic conſiderations.

It was alſo his frequent remark, that literary fame invariably ſuffers by the publication of every thing which is below the level of that celebrity which it has already gained. Letters, through whoſe progreſs either wit ſcatters it's ſcintillations, criticiſm it's inſtruction, knowledge it's treaſures, or fancy it's glow, are not beneath the dignity of the moſt eminent reputation; but ſince coercive circumſtances in a great meaſure precluded thoſe effuſions to the letters of Darwin, there would be no

kindneſs to his memory in obtruding them upon the public; none to the public in ſwelling out books with materials of no intrinſic value. It is only zeal without judgment, and the enthuſiaſm of partiality, which can take pleaſure in reading a great man's letters, which might have been thoſe of any tolerably educated mind, on which genius had never ſhone.

Biography of recently departed Eminence is apt to want characteriſtic truth, ſince it is generally written either by a near relation,

> Who writes to ſhare the fame of the deceaſed,
> So high in merit, and to him ſo dear!
> Such dwell on praiſes which they think they ſhare *;

or by an highly obliged friend, whom gratitude and affection render blindly partial, and who is influenced by a deſire of gratifying, with a deſcription of all-excelling endowment and angelic excellence,

* Young's Night Thoughts.

the

the ſurviving family of the author he commemorates; or by an editor who believes it highly conducive to his profits on the writings he publiſhes, or republiſhes, to claim for their author the unqualified admiration and reverence of mankind. All theſe claſſes of biographers do for the perſon whom they commemorate, what our generally wiſe Queen Elizabeth had the weakneſs to requeſt her painters would do for her portrait on the canvaſs; they draw a picture without ſhades.

But though people of credulous and effervescent zeal may be gratified by ſeeing a writer, whoſe works have charmed them, thus inveſted with unrivalled genius and ſuper-human virtue, the judicious few, whoſe approbation is genuine honor, are aware of this truth, aſſerted by Mrs. Barbauld in her beautiful, her ineſtimable Eſſay againſt Inconſiſtency in our Expectations. "Nature is much too frugal to

"heap

"heap together all manner of ſhining "qualities in one glaring maſs *." Every man has his errors, and the errors of public characters are too well known not to expoſe unfounded eulogium to the diſtaſte of all who prefer truth to enthuſiaſm. They are conſcious that the mind, as well as the perſon, of a celebrated character, ought to be drawn with diſpaſſionate fidelity, or not attempted; that though juſt biographic record will touch the failings of the good and the eminent with tenderneſs, it ought not to ſpread over them the veil of ſuppreſſion. A portrait painter might as well omit each appropriate diſtinction of feature, countenance, and form, becauſe it may not be elegant, and, like the Limner in Gay's Fables, finiſh his pictures from caſts of the Venus and Apollo, as the hiſtorian conceal the faults, foibles, and weakneſſes of the individual whom he delineates.

* Aikin's and Barbauld's Eſſays.

It

It is this fidelity of repreſentation which makes Mrs. Piozzi's Memoirs of Dr. Johnſon, and Mr. Boſwell's Tour, and his Life of that wonderful being, ſo valuable to thoſe who wiſh not for an idol to worſhip, inſtead of a great man to contemplate, as nature, paſſion, and habit, compounded his character.

If thoſe biographers had inveſted their deceaſed friend with excellence, which no ſombre irritability had ever overſhadowed;—with juſtice and candor, which no literary jealouſy, no party prejudice, no bigot zeal had ever warped;—the public might have been led, through boundleſs veneration of *one*, into injuſtice towards *many*. The world might have been induced to believe that all whoſe merit he has depreciated, whoſe talents he has undervalued, through the courſe of his Lives of the Poets, had *deſerved* the fate they met on thoſe pages. Then, to the injury of our national taſte, and to the literary and moral character of the great Engliſh Claſſics, more univerſal con-

deem confidential converſation, and which the world is ſo apt to ridicule as vain egotiſm; ſince it is underſtood that he has not left biographic documents; ſince Mr. Bilſborrow was ſcarcely in exiſtence when his illuſtrious friend firſt changed his ſphere of action; he muſt find himſelf as much a ſtranger to the particulars of his Lichfield reſidence, as I am of thoſe which were moſt prominent in the equal number of years he paſſed at Derby. Between us, all will probably be known that can now with accuracy be traced of Dr. Darwin.

To the beſt of my power I have preſumed to be the recorder of vaniſhed Genius, beneath the ever-preſent conſcioufneſs that biography and criticiſm have their ſacred duties, alike to the deceaſed, and to the public; precluding, on one hand, unjuſt depreciation, on the other, over-valuing partiality.

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

DOCTOR DARWIN.

CHAP. I.

DOCTOR ERASMUS DARWIN was the ſon of a private gentleman, near Newark, in Nottinghamſhire. He came to Lichfield to practiſe phyſic in the autumn of the year 1756, at the age of twenty-four; bringing high recommendations from the univerſity of Edinburgh, in which he had ſtudied, and from that of Cambridge, to which he belonged.

He was ſomewhat above the middle ſize, his form athletic, and inclined to corpulence; his limbs too heavy for exact pro-

portion. The traces of a ſevere ſmall-pox; features, and countenance, which, when they were not animated by ſocial pleaſure, were rather ſaturnine than ſprightly; a ſtoop in the ſhoulders, and the then profeſſional appendage, a large full-bottomed wig, gave, at that early period of life, an appearance of nearly twice the years he bore. Florid health, and the earnest of good humour, a ſunny ſmile, on entering a room, and on first accoſting his friends, rendered, in his youth, that exterior agreeable, to which beauty and ſymmetry had not been propitious.

He ſtammered extremely; but whatever he ſaid, whether gravely or in jeſt, was always well worth waiting for, though the inevitable impreſſion it made might not always be pleaſant to individual ſelf-love. Conſcious of great native elevation above the general ſtandard of intellect, he became, early in life, ſore upon oppoſition, whether

in

in argument or conduct, and always revenged it by ſarcaſm of very keen edge. Nor was he leſs impatient of the ſallies of egotiſm and vanity, even when they were in ſo ſlight a degree, that ſtrict politeneſs would rather tolerate than ridicule them. Dr. Darwin ſeldom failed to preſent their caricature in jocoſe but wounding irony. If theſe ingredients of colloquial deſpotiſm were diſcernible in *unworn* exiſtence, they increaſed as it advanced, fed by an ever-growing reputation within and without the pale of medicine.

Extreme was his ſcepticiſm to human truth. From that cauſe he often diſregarded the accounts his patients gave of themſelves, and rather choſe to collect his information by indirect inquiry and by croſs-examining them, than from their voluntary teſtimony. That diſtruſt and that habit were probably favourable to his ſkill in diſcovering the origin of diſeaſes, and

thence to his preeminent ſucceſs in effecting their cure;—but they impreſſed his mind and tinctured his converſation with an apparent want of confidence in mankind, which was apt to wound the ingenuous and confiding ſpirit, whether ſeeking his medical aſſiſtance, or his counſel as a friend. Perhaps this proneneſs to ſuſpicion mingled too much of art in his wisdom.

From the time at which Dr. Darwin firſt came to Lichfield, he avowed a conviction of the pernicious effects of all vinous fluid on the youthful and healthy conſtitution; an abſolute horror of ſpirits of all ſorts, and however diluted. His own example, with very few exceptions, ſupported his exhortations. From ſtrong malt liquor he totally abſtained; and if he drank a glaſs or two of Engliſh wine, he mixed it with water. Acid fruits, with ſugar, and all ſort of creams, and butter, were his luxuries; but he always ate plentifully of animal

animal food. This liberal alimentary regimen he preſcribed to people of every age, where unvitiated appetite rendered them capable of following it; even to infants. He deſpiſed the prejudice, which deems foreign wines more wholeſome than the wines of the country. If you muſt drink wine, ſaid he, let it be home-made. It is well known, that Dr. Darwin's influence and example have ſobered the county of Derby; that intemperance in fermented fluid of every ſpecies is almoſt unknown amongſt it's gentlemen.

Profeſſional generoſity diſtinguiſhed Dr. Darwin's medical practice. While reſident in Lichfield, to the prieſt and lay-vicars of it's cathedral, and their families, he always cheerfully gave his advice, but never took fees from any of them. Diligently, alſo, did he attend to the health of the poor in that city, and afterwards at Derby, and ſupplied their neceſſities by food, and all ſort

of charitable aſſiſtance. In each of thoſe towns, *his* was the cheerful board of almoſt open-houſed hoſpitality, without extravagance or parade; deeming ever the firſt unjuſt, the latter unmanly. Generoſity, wit, and ſcience, were his houſehold gods.

To thoſe many rich preſents, which Nature beſtowed on the mind of Dr. Darwin, ſhe added the ſeducing, and often dangerous gift of a highly poetic imagination; but he remembered how fatal that gift profeſſionally became to the young phyſicians, Akenſide and Armſtrong. Concerning *them*, the public could not be perſuaded, that ſo much excellence in an ornamental ſcience was compatible with intenſe application to a ſeverer ſtudy; with ſuch application as it held neceſſary to a reſponſibility, towards which it might look for the ſource of diſeaſe, on which it might lean for the ſtruggle with mortality. Thus, through the firſt twenty-three years of his practice as a phyſician,

Dr. Dar-

Dr. Darwin, with the wiſdom of Ulyſſes, bound himſelf to the medical maſt, that he might not follow thoſe deluſive ſyrens, the muſes, or be conſidered as their avowed votary. Occaſional little pieces, however, ſtole at ſeldom occurring periods from his pen; though he cautiouſly precluded their paſſing the preſs, before his latent genius for poetry became unveiled to the public eye in it's copious and dazzling ſplendour. Moſt of theſe minute gems have ſtolen into newſpapers and magazines, ſince the impregnable rock, on which his medicinal and philoſophical reputation were placed, induced him to contend for *that* ſpecies of fame, which ſhould entwine the Parnaſſian laurel with the balm of Pharmacy.

After this ſketch of Dr. Darwin's character and manners, let us return to the dawn of his profeſſional eſtabliſhment. A few weeks after his arrival at Lichfield, in the latter end of the year 1756, the intuitive

diſcernment, the ſkill, ſpirit, and deciſion, which marked the long courſe of his ſucceſsful practice, were firſt called into action, and brilliantly opened his career of fame. The late Mr. Inge of Thorpe, in Staffordſhire, a young gentleman of family, fortune, and conſequence, lay ſick of a dangerous fever. The juſtly celebrated Dr. Wilks of Willenhal, who had many years poſſeſſed, in wide extent, the buſineſs and confidence of the Lichfield neighbourhood, attended Mr. Inge, and had unſucceſsfully combated his diſeaſe. At length he pronounced it hopeleſs; that ſpeedy death muſt enſue, and took his leave. It was *then* that a fond mother, wild with terror for the life of an only ſon, as drowning wretches catch at twigs, ſent to Lichfield for the young, and yet inexperienced phyſician, of recent arrival there. By a reverſe and entirely novel courſe of treatment, Dr. Darwin gave his dying patient back to exiſtence, to health,

health, proſperity, and all that high reputation, which Mr. Inge afterwards poſſeſſed as a public magiſtrate.

The far-ſpreading report of this judiciouſly daring and fortunate exertion brought Dr. Darwin into immediate and extenſive employment, and ſoon eclipſed the hopes of an ingenious rival, who reſigned the conteſt; nor, afterwards, did any other competitor bring his certainly ineffectual lamp into *that* ſphere, in which ſo bright a luminary ſhone.

Equal ſucceſs, as in the caſe of Mr. Inge, continued to reſult from the powers of Dr. Darwin's genius, his frequent and intenſe meditation, and the avidity with which he, through life, devoted his leiſure to ſcientific acquirement, and the inveſtigation of diſeaſe. Ignorance and timidity, ſuperſtition, prejudice, and envy, ſedulouſly ſtrove to attach to his practice the terms, *raſh*, *experimental*, *theoretic*; not conſidering, that without

without *experimental* theory, the reſtoring ſcience could have made no progreſs; that neither time, nor all it's accumulation of premature death, could have enlarged the circle, in which the *merely* practical phyſician condemns himſelf to walk. Strength of mind, fortitude unappalled, and the perpetual ſucceſs which attended this great man's deviations from the *beaten* track, enabled him to ſhake thoſe miſts from his reputation, as the lion ſhakes to air the dewdrops on his mane.

In 1757, he married Miſs Howard, of the Cloſe of Lichfield, a blooming and lovely young lady of eighteen. A mind, which had native ſtrength; an awakened taſte for the works of imagination; ingenuous ſweetneſs; delicacy animated by ſprightlineſs, and ſuſtained by fortitude, made her a capable, as well as faſcinating companion, even to a man of talents ſo illuſtrious.—To her he could, with confi-

dence,

dence, commit the important task of rendering his children's minds a soil fit to receive, and bring to fruit, the stamina of wisdom and science.

Mrs. Darwin's own mind, by nature so well endowed, strengthened and expanded in the friendship, conversation, and confidence of so beloved, so revered a preceptor. But alas! upon her early youth, and a too delicate constitution, the frequency of her maternal situation, during the first five years of her marriage, had probably a baneful effect. The potent skill, and assiduous cares of *him*, before whom disease daily vanished from the frame of *others*, could not expel it radically from that of her he loved. It was however kept at bay thirteen years.

Upon the distinguished happiness of those years, she spoke with fervour to two intimate female friends in the last week of her existence, which closed at the latter end of the

the ſummer 1770: "Do not weep for my "impending fate," ſaid the dying angel, with a ſmile of unaffected cheerfulneſs. "In the ſhort term of my life, a great "deal of happineſs has been compriſed. "The maladies of my frame were peculiar; "the pains in my head and ſtomach, which "no medicine could eradicate, were ſpaſ- "modic and violent; and required ſtronger "meaſures to render them ſupportable "while they laſted, than my conſtitution "could ſuſtain without injury. The pe- "riods of exemption from thoſe pains were "frequently of ſeveral days duration, and "in my intermiſſions I felt no indication "of malady. Pain taught me the value of "eaſe, and I enjoyed it with a glow of "ſpirit, ſeldom, perhaps, felt by the habi- "tually healthy. While Dr. Darwin com- "bated and aſſuaged my diſeaſe from time "to time, his indulgence to all my wiſhes, "his active deſire to ſee me amuſed and "happy,

" happy, proved inceſſant. His houſe, as
" you know, has ever been the reſort of
" people of ſcience and merit. If, from
" my huſband's great and extenſive prac-
" tice, I had much leſs of his ſociety than
" I wiſhed, yet the converſation of his
" friends, and of my own, was ever ready
" to enliven the hours of his abſence. As
" occaſional malady made me doubly enjoy
" health, ſo did thoſe frequent abſences
" give a zeſt, even to delight, when I could
" be indulged with his company. My
" three boys have ever been docile, and
" affectionate.—Children as they are, I
" could truſt them with important ſecrets,
" ſo ſacred do they hold every promiſe they
" make. They ſcorn deceit, and falſehood
" of every kind, and have leſs ſelfiſhneſs
" than generally belongs to childhood.—
" Married to any other man, I do not ſup-
" poſe I could have lived a third part of
" thoſe years, which I have paſſed with
" Dr. Dar-

"Dr. Darwin; he has prolonged my days, "and he has bleſſed them."

Thus died this ſuperior woman, in the bloom of life, ſincerely regretted by all, who knew how to value her excellence, and *paſſionately* regretted by the ſelected few, whom ſhe honoured with her perſonal and confidential friendſhip. The year after his marriage, Dr. Darwin purchaſed an old half timbered houſe in the cathedral vicarage, adding a handſome new front, with venetian windows, and commodious apartments. This front looked towards Beacon ſtreet, but had no ſtreet annoyance, being ſeparated from it by a narrow, deep, dingle, which, when the Doctor purchaſed the premiſes, was overgrown with tangled briars and knot-graſs. In ancient days it was the receptacle of that water, which moated the Cloſe in a ſemicircle, the other half being defended by the Minſter pool. A fortunate opening, between the oppoſite houſes

and

and this which has been deſcribed, gives it a proſpect, ſufficiently extenſive, of pleaſant and umbrageous fields. Acroſs the dell, between his houſe and the ſtreet, Dr. Darwin flung a broad bridge of ſhallow ſteps with chineſe paling, deſcending from his hall-door, to the pavement. The tangled and hollow bottom he cleared into lawny ſmoothneſs, and made a terrace on the bank, which ſtretched in a line, level with the floor of his apartments, planting the ſteep declivity with lilacs and roſe-buſhes; while he ſcreened his terrace from the gaze of paſſengers, and the ſummer ſun,

——————" By all that higher grew,
" Of firm and fragrant leaf. Then ſwiftly roſe
" Acanthus, and each odorous, buſhy ſhrub,
" To fence the verdant wall."

The laſt gentleman who purchaſed this houſe and it's gardens, has deſtroyed the verdure and plantations of that dell, for the

purpoſe of making a circular coach-road from the ſtreet to the hall-door; a ſacrifice of beauty to convenience, and one of *many* proofs, that alteration and improvement are not always ſynonimous terms. To this *rus in urbe*, of Darwinian creation, reſorted, from it's early riſing, a knot of philoſophic friends, in frequent viſitation. The Rev. Mr. Michell, many years deceaſed. He was ſkilled in aſtronomic ſcience, modeſt and wiſe. The ingenious Mr. Kier, of Weſt Bromich, then Captain Kier. Mr. Boulton, known and reſpected wherever mechanic philoſophy is underſtood. Mr. Watt, the celebrated improver of the ſteam engine. And, above all others in Dr. Darwin's perſonal regard, the accompliſhed Dr. Small, of Birmingham, who bore the bluſhing honours of his talents and virtues to an untimely grave.

About the year 1765, came to Lichfield, from the neighbourhood of Reading, the young and gay philoſopher, Mr. Edgeworth,

worth, a man of fortune, and recently married to a Miſs Ellars of Oxfordſhire. The fame of Dr. Darwin's various talents allured Mr. E. to the city they graced. Then ſcarcely two and twenty, and with an exterior yet more juvenile, he had mathematic ſcience, mechanic ingenuity, and a competent portion of claſſical learning, with the poſſeſſion of the modern languages. His addreſs was gracefully ſpirited, and his converſation eloquent. He danced, he fenced, and winged his arrows with more than philoſophic ſkill; yet did not the conſciouſneſs of theſe lighter endowments abate his ardour in the purſuit of knowledge.

After having eſtabliſhed a friendſhip and correſpondence with Dr. Darwin, Mr. Edgeworth did not return to Lichfield till the ſummer of the year 1770. With him, at that period, came the late Mr. Day, of Bear-hill, in Berkſhire. Theſe young men had been fellow-ſtudents in the university

philippic againſt American reſiſtance; juſt commenced when the addreſs to Rouſſeau was compoſed. Generous indignation of the ſlave trade, practiſed without remorſe in the ſouthern colonies of North America, induced Mr. Day to refuſe them all credit for the patriotic virtue of that reſiſtance to new and unconſtitutional claims, which threatened their liberties.

In the courſe of the year 1770, Mr. Day ſtood for a full-length picture to Mr. Wright of Derby. A ſtrong likeneſs and a dignified portrait were the reſult. Drawn as in the open air, the ſurrounding ſky is tempeſtuous, lurid, and dark. He ſtands leaning his left arm againſt a column inſcribed to Hambden. Mr. Day looks upward, as enthuſiaſtically meditating on the contents of a book, held in his dropped right hand. The open leaf is the oration of that virtuous patriot in the ſenate, againſt the grant of ſhip-money, demanded by King Charles

Charles the firſt. A flaſh of lightning plays in Mr. Day's hair, and illuminates the contents of the volume. The poetic fancy, and what were *then* the politics of the original, appear in the choice of ſubject and attitude. Dr. Darwin ſat to Mr. Wright about the ſame period. *That* was a ſimply contemplative portrait, of the moſt perfect reſemblance.

During the ſummer and autumn of that year, was found, in Dr. Darwin's circle, as Mr. Day's viſitor, the late Mr. William Seward of London; yet, though a young man whoſe talents were conſiderably above the common level, he was rather a ſatellite than a planet in that little ſphere. He afterwards became known to the literary world as one of Dr. Johnſon's habitual companions, and, in the year 1795, he publiſhed Anecdotes of Diſtinguiſhed Perſons; a compilation of more induſtry in the collection, than grace in

the dreſs. Mr. W. Seward has *not* diſplayed in thoſe volumes, the happy art of animating narration. Common occurrences, even in the lives of eminent people, weary attention, unleſs they are told with elegance and ſpirit. From the ardently ſought ſociety of men of genius, this gentleman acquired a ſtriking degree of wit and ingenious alluſion in converſation, though it was too uniformly, and too cauſtically, of the ſarcaſtic ſpecies; but *every* ſort of fire ſeems to have evaporated from the language of Mr. W. Seward in paſſing through his *pen*.

Mr. Day and Mr. Edgeworth took the houſe now inhabited by Mr. Moreſby, in the little green valley of Stow, that ſlopes from the eaſt end of the cathedral, and forms, with it's old grey tower on the banks of it's lake, ſo *lovely* a landſcape. That houſe was Mr. Day's bachelor manſion through the year 1770; that of Mr. Edge-

Edgeworth, and his wife and family, in the enſuing year. All of this city and it's vicinity, who comprehended and taſted thoſe powers of mind which take the *higher* range of intellect, were delighted to mingle in ſuch aſſociation.

In February 1775, died Dr. Small, nor were ſo much talent and merit ſuffered to paſs away

"Without the meed of ſome melodious tears."

They were given in a ſhort elegy, by his moſt valued friend, Dr. Darwin; which elegy is engraven on a vaſe in Mr. Boulton's garden, ſacred to the memory of the ingenious deceaſed.

Ye Gay, and Young, who, thoughtleſs of your doom,
Shun the diſguſtful manſions of the dead,
Where Melancholy broods o'er many a tomb,
Mouldering beneath the yew's unwholeſome ſhade,

If chance ye enter theſe ſequeſter'd groves,
And day's bright ſunſhine, for a while, forego,
O leave to Folly's cheek, the laughs and loves,
And give one hour to philoſophic woe!

Here, while no titled duſt, no ſainted bone,
No lover, weeping over beauty's bier,
No warrior, frowning in hiſtoric ſtone,
Extorts your praiſes, or requeſts your tear,

Cold Contemplation leans her aching head,
And as on human woe her broad eye turns,
Waves her meek hand, and ſighs for ſcience dead,
For ſcience, virtue, and for Small ſhe mourns!

Epitaph on Dr. Small of Birmingham, by Mr. Day.

Beyond the rage of Time, or Fortune's power,
Remain, cold ſtone!—remain, and mark the hour
When all the nobleſt gifts that Heaven e'er gave
Were deſtined to a dark, untimely grave.
O taught on reaſon's boldeſt wing to riſe,
And catch each glimmer of the opening ſkies!
O gentle boſom! O unſpotted mind!
O friend to truth, to virtue, and mankind,
Thy lov'd remains we truſt to this pale ſhrine,
Secure to meet no ſecond loſs like thine!

In

In Mr. Day's epitaph there is ſome pathos, and more poetry; but it is far from being faultleſs. Perhaps it may be it's leaſt error, that the *name* of the bewailed is omitted, which Dr. Johnſon has well obſerved, ought *always* to be involved in the verſes. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that, in this caſe, the noun perſonal was not calculated to appear with grace in verſe; but that conſideration, though it doubtleſs *cauſed*, will not *juſtify*, the omiſſion. In Dr. Darwin's Elegy, it is placed out of all poſſibility of ludicrous equivoque, and *ſo* accents the laſt line, as to produce no mean or inharmonious ſound. The commendation, alſo, is, in the elegy, of much more dignified modeſty. Praiſe may be allowed to *glow* even upon a *tombſtone*, but ſhould never be hyperbolic. The epitaph is too exclamatory; and to aſſert that no ſecond loſs, ſo deplorable, can be ſuſtained, is infinitely too much for one, who, however

ever endowed and adorned, left the world at large no written teſtimony of that imputed ſuperiority. It is finely obſerved by the charming Prior,

> " That the diſtinguiſh'd part of men,
> By pencil, compaſs, ſword, or pen,
> Should, in life's viſit leave their name,
> In characters, which may proclaim
> That they, with ardour, ſtrove to raiſe
> At once their art, and country's praiſe;
> And, in the working, took great care
> That all was full, and round, and fair."

The circumſtances of Mr. Day's diſpoſition, habits, and deſtiny were ſo peculiar, as to juſtify digreſſion from the principal ſubject of theſe pages. Their author would deem it inexcuſable to introduce any thing fabulous; to embelliſh truth by the ſlighteſt colouring of fiction, even by exaggerating ſingularity, or heightening what is extraordinary; —but when *realities* are of a nature to intereſt and to amuſe in a collateral branch of the memoir,

memoir, the reader will not be diſpleaſed to turn from it's principal perſonage, diſtinguiſhed rather by wonderful endowment than by uncommon occurrences, while the picture of his friend's more eventful ſtory paſſes before their eyes.

Mr. Day's father died during his infancy, and left him an eſtate of twelve hundred pounds per annum. Soon after his mother married a gentleman of the name of Philips. The author of this narrative has often heard Mr. Day deſcribe him as one of thoſe common characters, who ſeek to ſupply their inherent want of conſequence, by a buſy teizing interference in circumſtances, with which they have no real concern.

Mrs. Philips, jointured with three hundred pounds a year out of her ſon's eſtate, was left his ſole guardian, or united with another perſon in the truſt, whom ſhe influenced. Herſelf, influenced by ſuch a huſband,

husband; often rendered uncomfortable the domestic situation of a high-spirited youth of genius. We may well suppose he impatiently brooked the preceptive impertinence, and troublesome authority of a man whom he despised, and who had no claim upon his obedience, though he considered it as a duty to pay some outward respect to the husband of his mother.

She frequently repined at the narrowness of her jointure, and still oftener expressed solicitude lest Mr. Philips, who had no fortune of his own, should lose in the decline of life, by losing *her*, all comfortable subsistence. It was Mr. Day's first act, on coming of age, and into possession of his estate, to augment his mother's jointure to four hundred, and to settle it upon Mr. Philips during his life. This bounty, to a man who had needlessly mortified and embittered so many years of his own infancy and youth, evinced a very

elevated mind. That mind had alſo been wounded by the caprice of a young lady, who "claimed the triumph of a lettered "heart," without knowing how to value and retain her prize. Before the proofs of her fickleneſs became indiſputable, he wrote the following beautiful elegy.

Yet once again, in yonder myrtle bowers,
Whence roſe-lipp'd zephyrs, hovering, ſhed perfume,
I weave the painted radiance of the flowers,
And preſs coy Nature in her days of bloom.

Shall ſhe, benignant, to the wondering eyes
Of the lone hermit all her charms unfold?
Or, gemm'd with dew, bid her gay florets riſe
To grace the ruſtic maſter of the fold?

Shall *theſe* poſſeſs her bright, her fragant ſtore,
Theſe ſnatch the wreath, by plaſtic Nature wove,
Nor wanton ſummer yield one garland more
To grace the boſom of the nymph I love?

For ſhe ſhall come; with her each ſiſter grace,
With her the kindred powers of harmony,
The deep receſſes of the grove ſhall trace,
And hang with flowers each conſecrated tree:

Blithe

Blithe Fancy too ſhall ſpread her glittering plumes,
She loves the white cliffs of Britannia's iſle,
She loves the ſpot where infant Genius blooms,
She loves the ſpot, where Peace and Freedom ſmile.

Unleſs her aid the mimic queen beſtow,
In vain freſh garlands the low vales adorn;
In vain with brighter tints the florets glow,
Or dewdrops ſparkle on the brow of morn.

Opes not one bloſſom to the ſpicy gale,
Throws not one elm it's moſs-wreath'd branches wide,
Wanders no rill through the luxuriant vale,
Or, gliſt'ning, ruſhes down the mountain ſide,

But thither, with the morning's earlieſt ray,
Fancy has wing'd her ever-mazy flight,
To hymn wild carols to returning day,
And catch the faireſt beams of orient light.

Proud of the theft ſhe mounts her lucid car,
Her car the rainbow's painted arch ſupplies;
Her ſwift wing'd ſteeds unnumber'd loves prepare,
And countleſs zephyrs waft her through the ſkies.

There, while her bright wheels pauſe in cloudleſs air,
She waves the magic ſceptre of command,
And all her flattering viſions, wild as fair,
Start into life beneath the potent wand.

Here,

Here, proudly nodding o'er the vale below,
High rocks of pearl reflect the morning ray,
Whence gushing streams of azure nectar flow,
And tinge the trickling herbage on their way.

These, cull'd from every mountain, every plain,
Perennial flowers the ambient air perfume,
Far off stern Boreas holds his drear domain,
Nor chains the streams, nor blights the sacred bloom.

Through all the year, in copse and tangled dale,
Lone Philomel her song to Venus pours,
What time pale Evening spreads the dewy veil,
What time the red Morn blushes on the shores.

Illusive visions! O, not here,—not here,
Does Spring eternal hold her placid reign,
Already Boreas chills the altering year,
And blasts the purple daughters of the plain.

So fade my promis'd joys!—fair scenes of bliss,
Ideal scenes, too long believ'd in vain,
Plung'd down and swallow'd deep in Time's abyss!—
So veering Chance, and ruthless fates ordain.

Thee, Laura, thee, by fount, or mazy stream,
Or thicket rude, unpress'd by human feet,
I sigh, unheeded, to the moon's pale beam;
Thee, Laura, thee, the echoing hills repeat.

O long

Oh! long of billows wild, and winds the ſport,
Seize, ſeize the ſafe aſylum that remains!
Here Truth, Love, Freedom, Innocence reſort,
And offer long oblivion to thy pains.

When panting, gaſping, breathleſs, on the ſtrand
The ſhipwreck'd mariner reclines his breaſt,
Say, ſhall he ſcorn the hoſpitable hand,
That points to ſafety, liberty, and reſt?

But *thou*, too ſoon forgetful of paſt woe,
Again would'ſt tempt the winds, and treacherous ſea;
Ah! ſhall the raging blaſt forget to blow,
Shall every wintry ſtorm be huſh'd for thee?

Not ſo! I dread the elemental war,
Too ſoon, too ſoon the calm, deceitful, flies;
I hear the blaſt come whiſtling from afar,
I ſee the tempeſt gathering in the ſkies.

Yet let the tempeſt roar!—love ſcorns all harms,
I plunge amid the ſtorm, reſolved to ſave;
This hour, at leaſt, I claſp thee in my arms,
The *next let* ruin join us in the grave.

The above verſes imply ſome perfidy, or diſappointment experienced by the lady to whom

whom they are addreſſed. She probably accepted Mr. Day's addreſſes in reſentment, and afterwards found ſhe had not a heart to give him. This is no uncommon caſe; and it is ſurely better to recede, even at the church-porch, than to plight at it's altar the vow of *unexiſting* love, which no effort of the *will* can implant in the boſom. It has been obſerved, that marriage is often the grave of love, but ſcarcely ever it's cradle; and what hope of happineſs, what hope of a bleſſing on nuptials, which commence with perjury!

Even at that period, "when youth, elate and gay, ſteps into life," Mr. Day was a rigid moraliſt, who proudly impoſed on himſelf cold abſtinence, even from the moſt innocent pleaſures; nor would he allow an action to be virtuous, which was performed upon any hope of reward, here, or hereafter. This ſeverity of principle, more abſtract and ſpecious, than natural

or uſeful, rendered Mr. Day ſceptical towards revealed religion, though by no means a *confirmed* deiſt. Moſt unlike Doctor Johnſon in thoſe doubts, he reſembled him in want of ſympathy with ſuch miſeries as ſpring from refinement and the ſofter affections; reſembled him alſo, in true compaſſion for the ſufferings of cold and hunger. To the power of relieving them he nobly ſacrificed all the parade of life, and all the pleaſures of luxury. For that maſs of human character which conſtitutes poliſhed ſociety, he avowed a ſovereign contempt; above all things he expreſſed averſion to the modern plans of female education, attributing to their influence the fickleness which had ſtung him. He thought it, however, his duty to marry; nurſed ſyſtematic ideas of the force of philoſophic tuition to produce future virtue, and loved to mould the infant and youthful mind.

Ever

Ever deſpicable in Mr. Day's eſtimation were the diſtinctions of birth, and the advantages of wealth; and he had learnt to look back with reſentment to the allurements of the Graces. He reſolved, if poſſible, that his wife ſhould have a taſte for literature and ſcience, for moral and patriotic philoſophy. So might ſhe be his companion in that retirement, to which he had deſtined himſelf; and aſſiſt him in forming the minds of his children to ſtubborn virtue and high exertion. He reſolved alſo, that ſhe ſhould be ſimple as a mountain girl, in her dreſs, her diet, and her manners; fearleſs and intrepid as the Spartan wives and Roman heroines.—There was no finding ſuch a creature ready made; philoſophical romance could not hope it. He muſt mould ſome infant into the being his fancy had imaged.

With the late Mr. Bicknel, then a barriſter, in conſiderable practice, and of

taintleſs reputation, and ſeveral years older than himſelf, Mr. Day lived on terms of intimate friendſhip. Credentials were procured of Mr. Day's moral probity, and with them, on his coming of age, theſe two friends journied to Shrewſbury, to explore the hoſpital in that town for foundling girls. From the little train, Mr. Day, in the preſence of Mr. Bicknel, ſelected two of twelve years each; both beautiful; one fair, with flaxen locks, and light eyes; her he called Lucretia. The other, a clear, auburn brunette, with darker eyes, more glowing bloom, and cheſnut treſſes, he named Sabrina.

Theſe girls were obtained on written conditions, for the performance of which Mr. Bicknel was guarantee. They were to this effect; that Mr. Day ſhould, within the twelvemonth after taking them, reſign one into the protection of ſome reputable tradeſwoman, giving one hundred pounds

to bind her apprentice; maintaining her, if ſhe behaved well, till ſhe married, or began buſineſs for herſelf. Upon either of theſe events, he promiſed to advance four hundred more. He avowed his intention of educating the girl he ſhould retain, with a view to making her his future wife; ſolemnly engaged never to violate her innocence; and if he ſhould renounce his plan, to maintain her decently in ſome creditable family till ſhe married, when he promiſed five hundred pounds as her wedding portion.

Mr. Day went inſtantly into France with theſe girls; not taking an Engliſh ſervant, that they might receive no ideas, except thoſe which himſelf might chooſe to impart.

They teized and perplexed him; they quarrelled, and fought inceſſantly; they ſickened of the ſmall-pox; they chained him to their bed-ſide by crying, and

ſcreaming if they were ever left a moment with any perſon who could not ſpeak to them in *Engliſh*. He was obliged to ſit up with them many nights; to perform for them the loweſt offices of aſſiſtance.

They loſt no beauty by their diſeaſe. Soon after they had recovered, croſſing the Rhone with his wards in a tempeſtuous day, the boat overſet. Being an excellent ſwimmer he ſaved them both, though with difficulty and danger to himſelf.

Mr. Day came back to England in eight months, heartily glad to ſeparate the little ſquabblers. Sabrina was become the favourite. He placed the fair Lucretia with a chamber milliner. She behaved well, and became the wife of a reſpectable linen-draper in London. On his return to his native country, he entruſted Sabrina to the care of Mr. Bicknel's mother, with whom ſhe reſided ſome months in a country village, while he ſettled his affairs

at

at his own manſion-houſe, from which he promiſed not to remove his mother.

It has been ſaid before, that the fame of Dr. Darwin's talents allured Mr. Day to Lichfield. Thither he led, in the ſpring of the year 1770, the beauteous Sabrina, then thirteen years old, and taking a twelve month's poſſeſſion of the pleaſant manſion in Stowe Valley, reſumed his preparations for implanting in her young mind the characteriſtic virtues of Arria, Portia, and Cornelia. His experiments had not the ſucceſs he wiſhed and expected. Her ſpirit could not be armed againſt the dread of pain, and the appearance of danger. When he dropped melted ſealing-wax upon her arms ſhe did not endure it heroically, nor when he fired piſtols at her petticoats, which ſhe believed to be charged with balls, could ſhe help ſtarting aſide, or ſuppreſs her ſcreams.

When he tried her fidelity in ſecret-

keeping, by telling her of well-invented dangers to himſelf, in which greater danger would reſult from it's being diſcovered that he was *aware* of them, he once or twice detected her having impaſted them to the ſervants, and to her play-fellows.

She betrayed an averſeneſs to the ſtudy of books, and of the rudiments of ſcience, which gave little promiſe of ability, that ſhould, one day, be reſponſible for the education of youths, who were to emulate the Gracchi.

Mr. Day perſiſted in theſe experiments, and ſuſtained their continual diſappointment during a year's reſidence in the vicinity of Lichfield. The difficulty ſeemed to lie in giving her *motive* to exertion, ſelf-denial, and heroiſm. It was againſt his plan to draw it from the uſual ſources, pecuniary reward, luxury, ambition, or vanity. His watchful cares had precluded all knowledge of the value of money, the reputation of beauty,

beauty, and it's concomitant deſire of ornamented dreſs. The only inducement, therefore, which this lovely artleſs girl could have to combat and ſubdue the natural preference, in youth ſo bloſſoming, of eaſe to pain, of vacant ſport to the labour of thinking, was the deſire of pleaſing her protector, though ſhe knew not how, or why he became ſuch. In that deſire, *fear* had greatly the aſcendant of *affection*, and fear is a cold and indolent feeling.

Thus, after a ſeries of fruitleſs trials, Mr. Day renounced all hope of moulding Sabrina into the being his imagination had formed; and ceaſing to behold her as his future wife, he placed her at a boarding-ſchool in Sutton-Coldfield, Warwickſhire. His truſt in the power of education faltered; his averſion to modern elegance ſubſided. From the time he firſt lived in the Vale of Stowe, he had daily converſed with the beautiful Miſs Honora Sneyd of Lichfield.

overcome. The endeavour, made at intervals, and by *viſible* effort, was more really ungraceful than the natural ſtoop, and unfaſhionable air. The ſtudied bow on entrance, the ſuddenly recollected *aſſumption* of attitude, prompted the riſible inſtead of the admiring ſenſation; neither was the ſhowy dreſs, in which he came back to his fair one, a jot more becoming.

Poor Elizabeth reproached her reluctant but inſuppreſſive ingratitude, upon which all this labour, theſe ſacrifices had been waſted. She confeſſed, that Thomas Day, *blackguard*, as he uſed jeſtingly to ſtyle himſelf, *leſs* diſpleaſed her eye than Thomas Day, *fine gentleman*.

Thus again diſappointed, he reſumed his accuſtomed plainneſs of garb, and neglect of his perſon, and went again upon the continent for another year, with purſuits of higher aim, more congenial to his talents and former principles. Returning

to

to England in the year 1773, he ſaw, that ſpring, Miſs Honora Sneyd united to his friend Mr. Edgeworth, who was become a widower; and, in the year 1780, he learned that his ſecond love of that name, Miſs Elizabeth Sneyd, was alſo, after the death of Honora married to Mr. Edgeworth.

It was ſingular that Mr. Day ſhould thus, in the courſe of ſeven years, find himſelf doubly rivalled by his moſt intimate friend; but his own previouſly renounced purſuit of thoſe beautiful young women, left him without either cauſe or ſenſations of reſentment on their account.

From the year 1773 this hitherto love-renounced philoſopher reſided chiefly in London, and amid the ſmall and ſelect circle which he frequented there, often met the pretty and elegant Miſs Eſther Mills of Derbyſhire, who, with modern acquirements, and amongſt modiſh luxuries,

ſuited

ſuited to her large fortune, had cultivated her underſtanding by books, and her virtues by benevolence. The again unpoliſhed ſtoic had every charm in *her* eyes,

"She ſaw Othello's viſage in his mind."

But, from indignant recollection of hopes ſo repeatedly baffled, Mr. Day looked with diſtruſt on female attention of however flattering ſemblance; nor was it till after years of her modeſt, yet tender devotion to his talents and merit, that he deigned to aſk Miſs Mills, if ſhe could, for his ſake, reſign all that the world calls pleaſures; all it's luxuries, all it's oſtentation. If, with him, ſhe could reſolve to employ, after the ordinary comforts of life were ſupplied, the ſurplus of her affluent fortune in clothing the naked, and feeding the hungry; retire with him into the country, and ſhun, through remaining exiſt-

exiſtence, the infectious taint of human ſociety.

Mr. Day's conſtitutional fault, like poor Cowper's, ſeemed that of looking with ſevere and diſguſted eyes upon thoſe venial errours in his ſpecies, which are mutually tolerated by mankind. This ſtain of miſanthropy was extremely deepened by his commerce with the world, reſtrained as that commerce had ever been. Satiric, jealous, and diſcerning, it was not eaſy to deceive him; yet, in a few inſtances, he *was* deceived by the appearance of virtues congenial to his own:

"For neither man, nor angel can diſcern
"Hypocriſy, the only evil that walks
"Inviſible, except to God alone."

To propoſals ſo formidable, ſo ſure to be rejected by a heart leſs than infinitely attached, Miſs Mills gladly aſſented; but ſomething more remained. Mr. Day inſiſted,

ſiſted, that her whole fortune ſhould be ſettled upon herſelf, totally out of his preſent or future control; that if ſhe grew tired of a ſyſtem of life ſo likely to weary a woman of the world, ſhe might return to that world any hour ſhe choſe, fully empowered to reſume it's habits, and it's pleaſures.

They married, and retired into the country about the year 1780, according to the beſt recollection of the author of theſe memoirs. No carriage; no appointed ſervant about Mrs. Day's own perſon; no luxury of any ſort. Muſic, in which ſhe was a diſtinguiſhed proficient, was deemed trivial. She baniſhed her harpſichord and muſic-books. Frequent experiments upon her temper, and her attachment, were made by him, whom ſhe lived but to obey and love. Over theſe ſhe often wept, but never repined. No wife, bound in the ſtricteſt fetters, as to the incapacity of claiming

claiming ſeparate maintenance, ever made more abſolute ſacrifices to the moſt imperious huſband, than did this lady, whoſe independence had been ſecured, and of whom nothing was demanded as a *duty*.

Thus Mr. Day found, at laſt, amid the very claſs he dreaded, that of faſhionable women, a heart whoſe paſſion for him ſupplied all the requiſites of his high-toned expectations.

Some eight or ten years after his marriage, the life of this ſingular being became, in its meridian, a victim to *one* of his uncommon ſyſtems. He thought highly of the gratitude, generoſity, and ſenſibility of horſes; and that whenever they were diſobedient, unruly, or vicious, it was owing to previous ill uſage from men. He had reared, fed, and tamed a favourite foal. When it was time it ſhould become ſerviceable, diſdaining to employ a horſebreaker, he would uſe it

to the bit and the burthen himſelf. He was not a good horſeman. The animal diſliking his new ſituation, heeded not the ſoothing voice to which he had been accuſtomed. He plunged, threw his maſter, and then, with his heels, ſtruck him on the head an *inſtantly* fatal blow. It was ſaid that Mrs. Day never afterwards ſaw the ſun; that ſhe lay in bed, into the curtains of which no light was admitted during the day, and only roſe to ſtray alone through her garden, when night gave her ſorrows congenial gloom. She ſurvived this adored huſband two years, and then died, broken-hearted, for his loſs.

Ere the principal ſubject of this biographic tract is reſumed, the reader will not be ſorry to learn the future deſtiny of Sabrina. She remained at ſchool three years; gained the eſteem of her inſtructreſs; grew feminine, elegant, and amiable. This young woman proved one of many inſtances

that

that thoſe modes of education, which have been ſanctioned by long experience, are ſeldom abandoned to advantage by ingenious ſyſtem-mongers.

When Sabrina leſt ſchool, Mr. Day allowed her fifty pounds annually. She boarded ſome years near Birmingham, and afterwards at Newport, in Shropſhire. Wherever ſhe reſided, wherever ſhe paid viſits, ſhe ſecured to herſelf friends. Beautiful and admired, ſhe paſſed the dangerous interval between ſixteen and twenty-five, without one reflection upon her conduct, one ſtain upon her diſcretion. Often the gueſt of Dr. Darwin, and other of her friends in Lichfield, eſteem and affection formed the tribute to her virtues.

Mr. Day correſponded with her parentally, but ſeldom ſaw her, and never without witneſſes. Two years after his marriage, and in her twenty-ſixth year, his friend, Mr. Bicknel, propoſed himſelf; that *very* Mr.

Bicknel, who went with Mr. Day to the Foundling Hoſpital at Shrewſbury, and by whoſe ſuretyſhip for his upright intentions the governors of that charity permitted Mr. Day to take from thence that beauteous girl, and the young Lucretia.

Mr. Bicknel, high in practice as a barriſter, was generally thought an advantageous match for Sabrina. More from prudential, than impaſſioned impulſe, did ſhe accept his addreſſes, yet became one of the moſt affectionate, as well as the beſt of wives. When Mr. Day's conſent was aſked by his *protégée*, he gave it in theſe ungracious words: "I do not refuſe my *conſent* to your marrying Mr. Bicknel; but remember you have not aſked my *advice*." He gave her the promiſed dower, five hundred pounds.

Mr. Bicknel, without patrimonial fortune, and living up to his profeſſional income, did not ſave money. His beloved wife

wife brought him two boys. When the eldeſt was about five years old, their father was ſeized with a paralytic ſtroke, which, in a few weeks, became fatal. His charming widow had no means of independent ſupport for herſelf and infants. Mr. Day ſaid he would allow her thirty pounds annually, to aſſiſt the efforts which he expected ſhe would make for the maintenance of herſelf and children. To have been more bounteous *muſt* ſurely have been in his *heart*, but it was *not* in his *ſyſtem*. Through the benevolent exertions of Mr. Harding, Solicitor General to the Queen, the ſum of eight hundred pounds was raiſed among the gentlemen of the bar for Mrs. Bicknel and her ſons; the intereſt to be the mother's during her life, and the principal, at her deceaſe, to be divided between her children.

That excellent woman has lived many years, and yet lives with the good Dr.

Burney of Greenwich, as his houſekeeper, and aſſiſtant in the cares of his academy. She is treated by him, and his friends, with every mark of eſteem and reſpect due to a gentlewoman, and one whoſe virtues entitle her to univerſal approbation. Her name was not in Mr. Day's will, but Mrs. Day continued the allowance he had made her, and *bequeathed* its continuance from her own fortune during Mrs. Bicknel's life. Mr. and Mrs. Day left no child.

Mr. Edgeworth, having alſo loſt his third wife, Elizabeth, is now the huſband of a fourth, a daughter of the reverend Dr. Beaufort of Ireland. He had four children by his firſt; a ſon, who of late years died in America; Miſs Edgeworth, the celebrated writer of Stories for Children, and Moral Tales for Young People, &c.; Miſs Anna, married to the ingenious Dr. Beddoes of Briſtol; and Miſs Emmeline, married to Mr. King, ſurgeon of the

ſame

ſame place. Honora left him an infant girl and boy, when ſhe died in the year 1780. The former inherited her mother's name, her beauty, and her malady, and died of conſumption at ſixteen. The amiable ſon yet lives, with fine talents, but infirm health. By his third wife, Elizabeth, he has ſeveral children; and by the preſent, two or three. From Mr. Edgeworth's large family elaborate ſyſtems of infantile education have proceeded: of them the author of theſe memoirs cannot ſpeak, as ſhe has never ſeen them. Other compoſitions, which are ſaid to be humorous and brilliant, are from the ſame ſource.

CHAPTER II.

It is now perhaps more than time to reſume the recollected circumſtances of Dr. Darwin's life.

After Dr. Small and Mr. Michell vaniſhed from the earth, and Mr. Day and Mr. Edgeworth, in the year 1772, left the Darwinian ſphere, the preſent ſir Brooke Boothby became an occaſional inhabitant of Lichfield; ſought, on every poſſibility, the converſation of Dr. Darwin, and obtained his laſting friendſhip. Sir Brooke had not leſs poetic fancy than Mr. Day, and even more external elegance than Mr. Edgeworth poſſeſſed when he won Honora's heart; elegance, which time, its general

general foe, has to this hour but little tarnished in the frame of sir Brooke Boothby.

A votary to botanic science, a deep reasoner, and a *clear-sighted* politician, is sir Brooke Boothby, as his convincing refutation of that splendid, dazzling, and misleading sophistry, Burke on the French Revolution, has proved. Ever to be lamented is it, that national pride, and jealousy, made our efficient senate, and a large majority of people in these kingdoms, unable to discern the fallacy which sir Brooke's answer unveiled. Fallacy, which has eventually overthrown the balance of power in Europe; built up, by the strong cement of opposition, the Republic's menacing and commanding tower, and wasted in combat with the phantom, Jacobinism, the nerves and sinews of defence against the time when *real* danger may assault Great Britain.

About the period at which sir Brooke first sought Dr. Darwin, sought him, also, Mr. Mun-

Mr. Munday of Marketon, whoſe exertions, as a public magiſtrate, have through life been moſt benignly ſedulous and wiſe; with whom

" The fair-ey'd Virtues in retirement dwell;"

and whoſe 'Needwood Foreſt' is one of the moſt beautiful *local* poems that has been written. Its landſcapes vivid and appropriate; its epiſodes ſweet and intereſting; its machinery well fancied and original; its numbers ſpirited, correct, and harmonious; while an infuſion of ſweet and gentle morality pervades the whole, and renders it dear to the heart as to the eye and ear. Great is the loſs to poetic literature, that, of this delightful compoſition, only a few copies were privately printed, for preſents to the author's friends and acquaintance; that he cannot overcome his reluctance to expoſe it to the danger of illiberal criticiſm from ſome of the ſelf-elected cenſors in every periodical publication. The public

imagines, that, on each ſubject diſcuſſed in a review and magazine, it obtains the joint opinion of a ſet of learned men, employed to appreciate the value of publications.—That in every ſuch work many writers are engaged is true; yet is it no leſs true that in each ſeparate tract the opinion is merely *individual* on every various theme. One perſon is appointed to review the medical, another the chirurgical, another the clerical, another the hiſtorical, another the philoſophical articles, another the ethics in proſe, and another the poetry; and each criticiſes *ſingly*, and *unaſſiſted*, in his appointed range.

The moſt diſtinguiſhed of Dr. Darwin's ſcientific friends, who viſited him from a diſtance when he lived in Lichfield, have now been enumerated.

He once thought inoculation for the meaſles might, as in the ſmall-pox, materially ſoften the diſeaſe; and, after the patriotic example of lady Mary Wortley Montague,

tague, he made the trial in his *own* family, upon his youngeſt ſon, Robert, now Dr. Darwin of Shrewſbury, and upon an infant daughter, who died within her firſt year. Each had, in conſequence, the diſeaſe ſo ſeverely, as to repel, in their father's mind, all future deſire of repeating the experiment.

In the year 1768, Dr. Darwin met with an accident of irretrievable injury in the human frame. His propenſity to mechanics had unfortunately led him to conſtruct a very ſingular carriage. It was a platform, with a ſeat fixed upon a very high pair of wheels, and ſupported in the front, upon the back of the horſe, by means of a kind of proboſcis, which, forming an arch, reached over the hind quarters of the horſe; and paſſed through a ring, placed on an upright piece of iron, which worked in a ſocket, fixed in the ſaddle. The horſe could thus move from one ſide of the road to the other, quartering, as it is called, at the will of the driver, whoſe conſtant attention was neceſ-

ſairly

ſarily employed to regulate a piece of machinery contrived, but *not well* contrived, for that purpoſe. From this whimſical carriage the Doctor was ſeveral times thrown, and the laſt time he uſed it, had the misfortune, from a ſimilar accident, to break the patella of his right knee, which cauſed, as it always muſt cauſe, an incurable weakneſs in the fractured part, and a lameneſs, not very diſcernible indeed, when walking on even ground.

It is remarkable, that this uncommon accident happened to three of the inhabitants of Lichfield in the courſe of *one* year; firſt, to the author of theſe memoirs in the prime of her youth; next, to Dr. Darwin; and, laſtly, to the late Mr. Levett, a gentleman of wealth and conſequence in the town. No ſuch misfortune was previouſly remembered in that city, nor has it once recurred through all the years which have ſince elapſed.

Dr. Darwin was happy in the talents, docility,

cility, and obedience, of his three ſons. An high degree of ſtammering retarded and embarraſſed his utterance. The eldeſt boy, Charles, had contracted the propenſity. With that wiſdom, which marked the Doctor's obſervations on the habits of life; with that deciſion of conduct, which always inſtantly followed the conviction of his mind, he ſent Charles abroad; at once to break the force of habit, formed on the contagion of daily example, and from a belief, that in the pronunciation of a foreign language, heſitation would be leſs likely to recur, than in ſpeaking thoſe words and ſentences, in which he had been accuſtomed to heſitate. About his twelfth year he was committed to the care of the ſcientific, the learned, the modeſt, and worthy Mr. Dickinſon, now rector of Blimel, in Shropſhire.

That the purpoſe of the experiment might not be fruſtrated, Dr. Darwin impreſſed that good man's mind with the neceſſity

ceſſity of not permitting his pupil to converſe in Engliſh; nor ever to hear it uttered after he could at all comprehend the French language. Charles Darwin returned to England, after a two year's reſidence on the continent, completely cured of ſtammering; with which he was not afterwards troubled; but his utterance was, from that time, ſomewhat thick and hurried.

Since theſe memoirs commenced, an odd anecdote of Dr. Darwin's early reſidence at Lichfield was narrated to a friend of the author by a gentleman, who was of the party in which it happened. Mr. Sneyd, then of Biſhton, and a few more gentlemen of Staffordſhire, prevailed upon the Doctor to join them in an expedition by water, from Burton to Nottingham, and on to Newark. They had cold proviſion on board, and plenty of wine. It was midſummer; the day ardent and ſultry. The noontide meal had been made, and

the

the glaſs gone gayly round. It was one of thoſe *few* inſtances, in which the medical votary of the Naiads tranſgreſſed his general and ſtrict ſobriety. If not abſolutely intoxicated, his ſpirits were in a high ſtate of vinous exhilaration. On the boat approaching Nottingham, within the diſtance of a few fields, he ſurpriſed his companions by ſtepping, without any previous notice, from the boat into the middle of the river, and ſwimming to ſhore. They ſaw him get upon the bank, and walk coolly over the meadows toward the town: they called to him in vain, he did not once turn his head.

Anxious leſt he ſhould take a dangerous cold by remaining in his wet clothes, and uncertain whether or not he intended to deſert the party, they rowed inſtantly to the town, at which they had not deſigned to have touched, and went in ſearch of their river-god.

In paſſing through the market-place

they ſaw him ſtanding upon a tub, encircled by a crowd of people, and reſiſting the entreaties of an apothecary of the place, one of his old acquaintance, who was importuning him to go to his houſe, and accept of other raiments till his own could be dried.

The party, on preſſing through the crowd, were ſurpriſed to hear him ſpeaking without any degree of his uſual ſtammer.

"Have I not told you, my friend, that "I had drank a conſiderable quantity of "wine before I committed myſelf to the "river. You know my general ſobriety; "and, as a profeſſional man, you *ought* "to know, that the *unuſual* exiſtence of "*internal* ſtimulus, would, in its effects "upon the ſyſtem, counteract the *external* "cold and moiſture."

Then, perceiving his companions near him, he nodded, ſmiled, and waved his hand, as enjoining them ſilence, thus, without heſitation, addreſſing the populace.

"Ye

" Ye men of Nottingham, liſten to me.
" You are ingenious and induſtrious me-
" chanics. By your induſtry life's comforts
" are procured for yourſelves and families.
" If you loſe your health, the power of
" being induſtrious will forſake you. *That*
" you know; but you may *not* know, that
" to breathe freſh and changed air con-
" ſtantly, is not leſs neceſſary to preſerve
" health, than ſobriety itſelf. Air becomes
" unwholeſome in a few hours if the win-
" dows are ſhut. Open thoſe of your
" ſleeping-rooms whenever you quit them
" to go to your workſhops. Keep the
" windows of your workſhops open when-
" ever the weather is not inſupportably
" cold. I have no *intereſt* in giving you
" this advice. Remember what I, your
" countryman, and a phyſician, tell you.
" If you would not bring infection and
" diſeaſe upon yourſelves, and to your
" wives and little ones, change the air you

" breathe, change it many times in a day,
" by opening your windows."

So ſaying, he ſtept down from the tub, and returning with his party to their boat, they purſued their voyage.

Dr. Johnſon was ſeveral times at Lichfield, on viſits to Mrs. Lucy Porter his daughter-in-law, while Dr. Darwin was one of its inhabitants. They had one or two interviews, but never afterwards ſought each other. Mutual and ſtrong diſlike ſubſiſted between them. It is curious that in Dr. Johnſon's various letters to Mrs. Thrale, now Mrs. Piozzi, publiſhed by that lady after his death, many of them, at different periods, dated from *Lichfield*, the name of Darwin cannot be found; nor indeed, that of any of the ingenious and *lettered* people who lived there; while of its mere common-life characters there is frequent mention, with many hints of Lichfield's intellectual barrenneſs,

renneſs, while it could boaſt a Darwin, and other men of claſſical learning, poetic talents, and liberal information. Of that number was the Rev. Thomas Seward Canon-Reſidentiary of its Cathedral; known to the lettered world as critical editor of Beaumont and Fletcher's Plays, in concert with Mr. Simpſon. Their edition came out in the year 1750. By people of literary taſte and judgment, it is allowed to be the beſt commentary on thoſe dramatic poets which has appeared; and that from the lucid ability of Mr. Seward's readings and notes. Strange, that dramas, ſo entirely of the Shakeſperian ſchool, in the buſineſs and intereſt of their plots; in the ſtrength and variety of their characters; and which, in their ſentiments and language, poſſeſs ſo much of Shakeſpeare's fire, ſhould be coldly and ſtupidly neglected in the preſent day, which has not *yet* forgotten to proclaim the Bard of Avon to be, what he ſurely is, the firſt

poet the world has produced. Shakeſpeare has had few more ſpirited eulogiſts than Mr. Seward, in the following lines, written about the year 1740, and publiſhed, together with other little poems of his, in Dodſley's Miſcellany.

Great Homer's birth ſeven rival cities claim,
Too mighty ſuch monopoly of fame!
Yet not to birth alone did Homer owe
His wond'rous worth, what Egypt could beſtow,
With all the ſchools of Greece, and Aſia join'd,
Enlarg'd th' immenſe expanſion of his mind.
Nor yet unrivall'd the Meonian ſtrain,
The Britiſh Eagle and the Mantuan Swan
Tower equal heights; but happier, Stratford, thou
With unconteſted laurels deck thy brow!
Thy Bard was thine unſchool'd, and from thee brought
More than all Egypt, Greece, or Aſia taught;
Not Homer's ſelf ſuch peerleſs honours won,
The Greek has rivals, but thy Shakeſpeare none!

In the later editions of Dodſley's Miſcellany, the word *ſwan*, in the fourth couplet,

couplet, is most absurdly changed to *swain*, because it chimed more completely to the foregoing rhyme, *strain*, at the expense of every thing like sense and accuracy in the opposite terms; at the expense of making a *bird* and a *man* fly equal heights ere balloons were dreamed of. Mr. Seward was often heard to laugh at this instance of editorial presumption and stupidity *.

Another of the Lichfield literati, overlooked by the arrogant Johnson, was the Reverend Arch-Deacon Vyse, the amiable the excellent father of the present ingenious Dr. Vyse of Lambeth, and his gallant brother General Vyse. Mr. Vyse was not only a man of learning, but of Prioric talents in the metrical impromptu. Gentle reader, behold an instance! and if thou hatest not rhyme, as does many an ungentle reader, "worse than toad or asp," thou wilt not think it intrusive.

* This gentleman was father of the writer of these memoirs.

Mrs. Vyſe, herſelf a beautiful woman, had a fair friend whoſe name was Charlotte Lynes. At a convivial meeting of Lichfield gentlemen, moſt of whom could make agreeable verſes, it was propoſed that every perſon in company ſhould give a ballad or epigram on the lady whoſe health he drank. Mr. Vyſe toaſted Miſs Lynes, and, taking out his pencil, wrote the following ſtanzas extempore.

Shall Pope ſing his flames
With quality dames,
And ducheſſes toaſt when he dines;
Shall Swift verſes compoſe
On the Girl at the Roſe,
While unſung is my fair Charlotte Lynes?

O! were Phœbus my friend,
Or would Bacchus but lend
The ſpirit that flows from his vines,
The laſs of the mill,
Molly Mogg, and Lepell,
Should be dowdies to fair Charlotte Lynes.

Any porter may ſerve,
For a copy, to carve

An

An Alcides, with muſcular chines;
But a Venus to draw,
Bright as ſun ever ſaw,
Let him copy my fair Charlotte Lynes.

In the midſt of gay ſights,
And foreign delights,
For his country the baniſh'd man pines;
Thus, from *her* when away,
Though my glances may ſtray,
Yet my heart is with fair Charlotte Lynes.

It is Atropus' ſport,
With her ſheers to cut ſhort
The thread, which dame Lacheſis twines;
But forbear, you curſt jade,
Or cut mine, not the thread
That was ſpun for my fair Charlotte Lynes!

For quadrille when the fair
Cards and counters prepare
They caſt out the tens, eights, and nines,
And in love 'tis my fear
The like fate I ſhall ſhare,
Diſcarded by fair Charlotte Lynes.

With hearts full of rapture
Our good dean and chapter

Count

Count over, and finger their fines;
But I'd give their eſtate,
Were it ten times as great,
For one kiſs of my fair Charlotte Lynes.

The young pair, for a crown,
On the book laid him down,
The ſacrift obſequiously joins,
Were I biſhop I ſwear
I'd reſign him my chair,
To unite me with fair Charlotte Lynes.

For my firſt night I'd go
To thoſe regions of ſnow,
Where the ſun, for ſix months, never ſhines,
And O! there ſhould complain
He too ſoon came again
To diſturb me with fair Charlotte Lynes!

Theſe verſes were much read, admired, and copied. Mr. Vyſe thought his fair Charlotte growing too vain in conſequence, and once, when ſhe was complimented on the ſubject in a large company, he ſaid ſmilingly,

"Charlotte

" Charlotte the power of ſong can tell,
" For 'twas the ballad made the belle."

The late Reverend William Robinſon was alſo a choice ſpirit amongſt thoſe Lichfieldians, whoſe talents illuminated the little city at that period. Too indolent for authoriſm, he was, by wit and learning, fully empowered to have ſhone in that ſphere. More of him hereafter.

Theſe were the men whoſe intellectual exiſtence paſſed unnoticed by Dr. Johnſon in his depreciating eſtimate of Lichfield talents. But Johnſon liked only *worſhippers*. Arch-deacon Vyſe, Mr. Seward, and Mr. Robinſon, paid all the reſpect and attention to Dr. Johnſon, on theſe his viſits to their town, due to his great abilities, his high reputation, and to whatever was eſtimable in his *mixed* character; but they were not in the herd that "paged his heels," and ſunk, in ſervile ſilence, under the force of his dogmas, when their hearts

and

and their judgments bore *contrary* teſtimony.

Certainly, however, it was an arduous hazard to the feelings of the company to oppoſe, in the ſlighteſt degree, Dr. Johnſon's opinions. His ſtentor lungs; that combination of wit, humour, and eloquence, which "could make the *worſe* appear the *better* reaſon;" that ſarcaſtic contempt of his antagoniſt, never ſuppreſſed or even ſoftened by the due reſtraints of good-breeding, were ſufficient to cloſe the lips, in his preſence, of men, who could have met him in fair argument, on *any* ground, literary or political, moral or characteriſtic.

Where Dr. Johnſon was, Dr. Darwin had no chance of being heard, though at leaſt his equal in genius, his ſuperior in ſcience; nor indeed, from his impeded utterance, in the company of *any* overbearing declaimer; and he was too intellectually great to be an humble liſtener to Johnſon, therefore he ſhunned him, on having ex-

perienced what manner of man he was. The ſurly dictator felt the mortification, and revenged it, by *affecting* to avow his diſdain of powers too diſtinguiſhed to be an object of *genuine* ſcorn.

Dr. Darwin, in his turn, was not much more juſt to Dr. Johnſon's genius. He uniformly ſpoke of him in terms, which, had they been deſerved, would have juſtified Churchill's "immane Pompoſo," as an appellation of *ſcorn*; ſince, if his perſon was huge, and his manners pompous and violent, ſo were his talents vaſt and powerful, in a degree from which only prejudice and reſentment could withhold reſpect.

Though Dr. Darwin's heſitation in ſpeaking precluded his flow of colloquial eloquence, it did not impede, or at all leſſen, the force of that conciſer quality, *wit*. Of ſatiric wit he poſſeſſed a very peculiar ſpecies. It was neither the dead-doing broadſide of Dr. Johnſon's ſatire, nor the aurora borealis of Gray, whoſe arch, yet coy and quiet faſtidi-

faſtidiouſneſs of taſte and feeling, as recorded by Maſon, glanced bright and cold through his converſation, while it ſeemed difficult to define its nature; and while its effects were rather *perceived* than *felt*, exciting ſurpriſe more than mirth, and never awakening the pained ſenſe of being the object of its ridicule. That unique in humorous verſe, the Long Story, is a complete and beautiful ſpecimen of Gray's ſingular vein.

Darwinian wit is not more eaſy to be defined; *inſtances* will beſt convey an idea of its character to thoſe who never converſed with its poſſeſſor. To give ſuch as are recollected at this moment, it will be neceſſary to recall Mr. Robinſon, already mentioned as a choice ſpirit of Lichfield. His perpetual ſtream of frolic raillery was of a ſpecies ſo ſingular, as to have excluſively obtained, wherever he was *known*, the title of *rector*, "The Rector," as if there were no *other*. The odd excurſions

of

of his fancy were enriched by an exhauſtleſs ſtore of claſſic, hiſtoric, and theological learning, groteſquely applied to the paſſing ſubjects of converſation, and *that* with unrivalled eaſe and happineſs. It is to be regretted that no records remain of talents ſo uncommon, except in the fading traces of contemporary recollection, which time and mortality obliterate ſo ſoon.—Frequently, during his youth and middle life, in the faſhionable circles of Bath, London, and the ſummer public places, the whimſical ſallies of the Rector's ſportive imagination, which were never coarſe or low, common place or ill-natured, had conſiderable publicity and eclat. They were like the lambent lightning of a calm ſummer evening, brilliant, but not dangerous. The ſweetneſs of his temper was the ſecurity of every man's ſelf-love; and, while his humorous gayety "ſet the table "in a roar," the company laughed at their eaſe.

But

But then good-nature was the *only* curb his wit could endure. Without the ſlighteſt taint of infidelity, Robinſon could not reſiſt the temptation of lancing it even at the moſt ſerious objects and themes.

One evening, when he and Dr. Darwin were in company together, the Rector had, as uſual, thrown the bridle upon the neck of his fancy, and it was ſcampering over the church-yard, and into the chancel, when the Doctor exclaimed—"Excellent! "Mr. Robinſon is not only a clever fellow, "but a *d——d* clever fellow."

Soon after the ſubject of common ſwearing was introduced, Mr. R. made a mock eulogium upon its power to animate dullneſs, and to ſeaſon wit.—Dr. Darwin obſerved, "Chriſt ſays, Swear not at *all.* "St. Paul tells us we may ſwear *occa-* "*ſionally.* Mr. Robinſon adviſes us to "ſwear *inceſſantly.* Let us compromiſe "between theſe counſellors, and ſwear "by *non-en-ti-ties.* I will ſwear by my im-pu-

" im-pu-dence, and Mr. Robinſon by his " mo-deſt-y."

That gentleman, whoſe wit, where it met no equal reſiſtance, kept an untired and ſparkling courſe, could ſeldom recover its track when the jeſt and the laugh were with his adverſary. So often was it thus when Dr. Darwin and he met, that Mr. R. rather ſhunned than ſought the rencounter. It was curious, that he, who met indulgence from his clerical and pious brethren for thoſe frolic emanations, wont to play upon the themes his heart revered, ſhould ſo often find himſelf reproved, with cutting raillery, for the practice, by one not famous for holding religious ſubjects in veneration.

Dr. Darwin was converſing with a brother Botaniſt, concerning the plant Kalmia, then a juſt imported ſtranger in our greenhouſes and gardens. A lady, who was preſent, concluding he had ſeen it, which in fact he had not, aſked the Doctor what

were the colours of the plant. He replied, "Madam, the Kalmia has preciſely the colours of a ſeraph's wing." So fancifully did he expreſs his want of conſciouſneſs reſpecting the appearance of a flower whoſe name and rareneſs were all he knew of the matter.

Dr. Darwin had a large company at tea. His ſervant announced a ſtranger lady and gentleman. The female was a conſpicuous figure, ruddy, corpulent, and tall. She held by the arm a little, meek-looking, pale, effeminate man, who, from his cloſe adherence to the ſide of the lady, ſeemed to conſider himſelf as under her protection.

"Dr. Darwin, I ſeek you not as a phy-
"ſician, but as a Belle Eſprit. I make
"this huſband of mine," and ſhe looked down with a ſideglance upon the animal, "treat me every ſummer with a tour
"through one of the Britiſh counties,
"to explore whatever it contains worth
"the attention of ingenious people. On
"arriving

" arriving at the ſeveral inns in our route, " I always ſearch out the man of the " vicinity moſt diſtinguiſhed for his genius " and taſte, and introduce myſelf, that he " may direct, as the objects of our exami- " nation, whatever is curious in nature, " art, or ſcience. Lichfield will be our " headquarters during ſeveral days. Come, " Doctor, whither muſt we go, what muſt " we inveſtigate to-morrow, and the next " day, and the next? here are my tablets " and pencil."

" You arrive, madam, at a fortunate " juncture. To-morrow you will have an " opportunity of ſurveying an annual ex- " hibition perfectly worth your attention. " To-morrow, madam, you will go to " Tutbury bull-running."

The ſatiric laugh with which he ſtam- mered out the laſt word, more keenly pointed this ſly, yet broad rebuke to the vanity and arrogance of her ſpeech. She

had been up amongſt the boughs, and little expected they would break under her ſo ſuddenly, and with ſo little mercy. Her large features ſwelled, and her eyes flaſhed with anger—"I was recommended "to a man of genius, and I find him in- "ſolent and ill-bred."—Then, gathering up her meek and alarmed huſband, whom ſhe had looſed when ſhe firſt ſpoke, under the ſhadow of her broad arm and ſhoulder, ſhe ſtrutted out of the room.

After the departure of this curious couple, his gueſts told their hoſt he had been very unmerciful. I choſe, replied he, to avenge the cauſe of the little man, whoſe nothingneſs was ſo oſtentatiouſly diſplayed by his lady-wife. Her vanity has had a ſmart emetic. If it abates the ſymptoms, ſhe will have reaſon to thank her phyſician who adminiſtered without hope of a fee.

CHAPTER III.

ABOUT the year 1771, commenced that great work, the Zoonomia, firſt publiſhed in 1794; the gathered wiſdom of three-and-twenty years. Ingenious, beyond all precedent, in its conjectures, and embracing, with giant-graſp, almoſt every branch of philoſophic ſcience; diſcovering their bearings upon each other, and thoſe ſubtle, and, till then, concealed links by which they are united; and with their ſeparate, conjunctive and collective influence upon human organization; their ſometimes probable, and at others demonſtrative, power, under judicious application, of reſtoring that regularity to the mechaniſm of animal life,

which is comprehended under the term health.

It cannot be denied that in the purſuit of a new and favorite ſyſtem, Dr. Darwin has, in ſome inſtances, imperiouſly rejected the adverſe facts which oppoſed his theory. His chapter on Inſtinct, highly ingenious as it is, affords proof of *his* hypothetical devotion. He there denies, at leaſt by ſtrong implication, the exiſtence of that faculty ſo termed, and which God has given to his inferior family, in lieu of the rational. But this wonderfully ingenious philoſopher ſeeks in vain to melt down in his ſyſtem of *imitation* amongſt brutes, the eternal boundaries which ſeparate inſtinct and reaſon.

God, who has exempted the orders of brutal life from reſponſibility for their actions in this terreſtrial ſphere, gave them inſtinct, incapable of error, but alſo, beyond a certain very limited degree, incapable

ble of improvement; incapable of all that are termed the artificial paſſions.

God, who made man accountable, and earthly life his ſtate of trial, gave him the nobler faculty of reaſon, liable to err, but, in countleſs degrees, more connected with volition; and, according to its different degrees of native ſtrength, almoſt interminably capable of improvement.

Inſtinct cannot be that lower degree of reaſon which empowers the animal to *obſerve*, and, by will and choice, to *imitate* the actions, and acquire the arts of his ſpecies; ſince, were it ſo, imitation would not be confined to his own particular genus, but extend to the actions, the cuſtoms, and the arts of other animals; as men obſerve, and emulate, the actions, cuſtoms, and arts of the natives of other countries. Thus, improvement would have advanced amongſt brutes, in proportion as it has advanced in mankind. That it has not ad-

vanced in brutal life, through countleſs generations, we have the teſtimony of all records to aſcertain. Therefore is it, that the *inſtinctive* faculty muſt be a totally different power to the *rational*; in as much as it has a perfection unknown to reaſon, and as it has an incapacity of progreſſion which counteracts that limited perfection, and renders it a thouſand fold inferior to the expanding, aſpiring, and ſtrengthening power of human intelligence. Between the ſeparate nature of thoſe faculties, inſurmountable and everlaſting are the barriers. Philoſophy cannot throw them down; but in the attempt, as in many another,

> "Vaulting AMBITION doth o'erleap itſelf,
> "And falls where it would mount."

If the Creator had indeed given to brutal life that degree of reaſon, which Dr. Darwin allots to it, when he aſſerts, that

that its various orders act from *imitation*, which muſt be *voluntary*, rather than from *impulſe*, which is *reſiſtleſs*, the reſulting miſchief of diſorder and confuſion amongſt thoſe claſſes had outweighed the aggregate good of improvement. It is reaſonleſs, will-leſs inſtinct, limited but undeviating, which alone could have preſerved, as they were in the beginning, are now, and ever ſhall be, the numberleſs diviſions and ſubdiviſions of all merely animal life. As attraction is the planetary curb of the ſolar ſyſtem, confining all orbs to their proper ſpheres, ſo is inſtinct the reſtraint, by which brutes are withheld from incroaching upon the allotted ranges and privileges of their fellow-brutes; from loſing their diſtinct natures in imitation, blending and endleſs. If imitation were the ſource of brutal acquirements, whence the undeviating *ſameneſs* of thoſe acquirements? whence their never extended *limits*?

Wherefore,

Wherefore, ſince the ear of the feathered warbler is open to the immenſe variety of ſtrains, poured from the throat of birds of *other plume*, whence its invariable choice of the *family* ſong? And, when the female ſees ſuch numbers of different neſts building around her for the reception of the callow brood, whence her inflexible attachment to the *family* neſt?

Dr. Darwin read his chapter on Inſtinct to a lady, who was in the habit of breeding canary-birds. She obſerved that the pair, which he then ſaw building their neſt in her cage, were a male and female, who had been hatched, and reared in that *very cage*, and were not in exiſtence when the moſſy cradle was fabricated, in which *they* firſt ſaw light. She aſked him how, upon his principle of *imitation*, he could account for the neſt he then ſaw building, being conſtructed, even to the preciſe diſpoſal of every hair and ſhred of wool, upon the

the model of *that*, in which the pair were *born*, and on which every other canary-bird's neſt is conſtructed, where the proper materials are furniſhed. That of the pye-finch, added ſhe, is of much compacter form, warmer, and more comfortable. Pull one of them to pieces for its materials; place another before theſe canary-birds, as a pattern, and ſee if they will make the ſlighteſt effort to imitate their model! No, the reſult of their labors will, upon inſtinctive, hereditary impulſe, be exactly the ſlovenly little manſion of their *race*; the ſame with that which their parents built before themſelves were hatched. The Doctor could not do away the force of that ſingle fact, with which his ſyſtem was incompatible; yet he maintained that ſyſtem with philoſophic ſturdineſs, though experience brought confutation from a *thouſand* ſources.

Mr. Fellowes, the eminent champion in

our

our day, of true and perfect Chriſtianity, againſt the gloomy miſrepreſentations of the Calviniſts, has not leſs truely than ingeniouſly obſerved, that "Dr. Darwin's "underſtanding had ſome of the properties "of the microſcope; that he looked with "ſingularly curious and prying eyes, into "the economy of plants and the habits "of animals, and laid open the labyrinth "of nature in ſome of her moſt elabo-"rate proceſſes and moſt ſubtle combina-"tions; that he was acquainted with "more links in the chain of *ſecond* cauſes "than had probably been known to any "individual, who went before him; but "that he dwelt ſo much, and ſo *excluſively* "on ſecond cauſes, that he too generally "ſeems to have forgotten that there is a "firſt."

Certainly Dr. Darwin's diſtinguiſhed power of diſcloſing the arcana of nature, enabled him to explore, and detect, the fallacy

fallacy of many received and long-eſtabliſhed opinions; but the proud conſciouſneſs that his ſcientific wand ſo often poſſeſſed the power attributed by Milton to Ithuriel's ſpear, betrayed him, at times, into ſyſtematic error. Convinced, by deep thought and philoſophic experience, that mankind received ſo *many* prejudices for truths, he looked too jealouſly at *all* its moſt revered and ſacred axioms. Beneath the force of that jealouſy he denied the power of inſtinct, and ſolved it into imitation. To have admitted, on the teſtimony of all impartial obſervation, all fair experiment, the *unblending* natures of inſtinct and reaſon, muſt have involved that reſponſibility of man to his Creator for his actions in this his ſtate of trial, which Dr. Darwin conſidered as a gloomy unfounded ſuperſtition. Unqueſtionably, if reaſon, like inſtinct, were incapable of warp from the power of volition, man could

could have no vice which might juſtly render him amenable to puniſhment in a future ſtate; neither could he have any virtue for whoſe cultivation he might hope eternal reward. But, ſince his rational faculty is *choice*, not *impulſe*, capable, *at will*, of refinement or degradation; whether it ſhall be his pole-ſtar to virtue and piety, or his ignis-fatuus to vice and irreligion, it inevitably follows that man is accountable to God for his conduct; that there is a future and retributory ſtate.

If this brilliant and dazzling philoſopher had not cloſed the lynx's eye of his underſtanding on that clear emanation from the ſource of intellectual as well as of planetary light, he had indeed been great and illuminated above the ſons of men. Then had he diſdained to have mingled that *art* in his *wiſdom*, which was ſometimes found in his common-life actions, and of which he not unfrequently boaſted.

That

That noble ſimplicity which diſdains the varniſh of diſingenuous deſign in principle and in conduct, in converſation and in writing, was the deſideratum of Dr. Darwin's ſtrong and comprehenſive mind. It's abſence rendered his ſyſtems, which were ſo often luminous, at times impenetrably dark by paradox. It's abſence rendered his poetic taſte ſomewhat meretricious from his rage for ornament; chilled his heart againſt the ardor of devotion, and chained his mighty powers within the limits of *ſecond* cauſes, though formed to ſoar to INFINITE.

If, however, the doctrines of the Zoonomia are not always infallible, it is a work which muſt ſpread the fame of it's author over lands and ſeas, to whatever clime the ſun of ſcience has irradiated and warmed. The Zoonomia is an exhauſtleſs repoſitory of intereſting facts, of curious experiments in natural productions, and in medical

medical effects; a vaſt and complicated ſcheme of diſquiſition, incalculably important to the health and comforts of mankind, ſo far as they relate to objects *merely terreſtrial*; throwing novel, uſeful, and beautiful light on the ſecrets of phyſiology, botanical, chemical, and aerological.

The world may conſider the publication of the Zoonomia as a new era of pathologic ſcience; the ſource of important advance in the power of diſcloſing, abating, and expelling diſeaſe. Every young profeſſor of medicine, if God has given him comprehenſion, aſſiduity, and energy, ſhould devote his nights and days to ſtudying this great work. It will teach him more than the pages of Galen and Hippocrates; than ſchools and univerſities know to impart. Thoſe inſtructions which, through the channel of it's pages, flow to the world, enabled Dr. Robert Darwin of Shrewſbury

to

to attain inſtant eminence as a phyſician in that county, at his firſt outſetting, and in the bloom of ſcarcely ripened youth; to continue a courſe of practice, which has been the bleſſing of Shropſhire; it's ſphere expanding with his growing fame. That ſon, who joins to a large portion of his father's ſcience and ſkill, all the ingenuous kindneſs of his mother's heart. That ſon, whoſe riſing abilities and their early eclat, recompenſed to Dr. Darwin a ſevere deprivation in the death of his eldeſt and darling ſon, Charles, of whom this memoir has already ſpoken. He was ſnatched from the world in the prime of his youth, and with the higheſt character at the univerſity of Edinburgh, by a putrid fever, ſuppoſed to have been caught from diſſecting, with a ſlightly wounded finger, a corpſe in a ſtate of dangerouſly advanced putrefaction. When ſociety became deprived of his luxuriantly bloſſom-

ing talents, Mr. Charles Darwin had recently received an honorary medal from the Society of Arts and Sciences, for having diſcovered a criterion by which *pus* may be diſtinguiſhed from *mucus*.

A few years before Dr. Darwin left Lichfield as a reſidence he commenced a botanical ſociety in that city. It conſiſted of himſelf, Sir Brooke Boothby, then Mr. Boothby, and a Proctor in the Cathedral juriſdiction, whoſe name was Jackſon. Sprung from the loweſt poſſible origin, and wholly uneducated, that man had, by the force of literary ambition and unwearied induſtry, obtained admittance into the courts of the ſpiritual law, a profitable ſhare of their emoluments, and had made a tolerable proficience in the Latin and French languages. His life, which cloſed at ſixty, was probably ſhortened by late acquired habits of ebriety. He paſſed through it's courſe a would-be philoſopher, a turgid

a turgid and ſolemn coxcomb, whoſe morals were not the beſt, and who was vain of lancing his pointleſs ſneers at Revealed Religion.

Jackſon admired Sir Brooke Boothby, and worſhipped and *aped* Dr. Darwin. He became a uſeful drudge to each in their joint work, the tranſlation of the Linnean ſyſtem of vegetation into Engliſh from the Latin. His illuſtrious coadjutors exacted of him fidelity to the *ſenſe* of their author, and they corrected Jackſon's inelegant Engliſh, weeding it of it's pompous coarſeneſs.

The Doctor was probably diſappointed that no recruits flocked to his botanical ſtandard at Lichfield. The young men of the genteel claſſes in that city devoted themſelves to profeſſions with which natural hiſtory had no inſeparable connexion. However uſeful, entertaining, and creditable might be it's ſtudies, they felt little deſire to deck the board of ſeſ-

ſion, the pulpit, or the enſigns of war, with the Linnean wreaths and the chemical cryſtalines. Thus the original triumvirate received no augmentation, yet the title was maintained. Various obſervations, ſigned Lichfield Botanical Society, were ſent to the periodical publications, and it was amuſing to hear ſcientific travellers, on their tranſit over Lichfield, inquiring after the ſtate of the botanical ſociety there.

About the year 1779, at the houſe of his friend, Mr. Sneyd of Belmont, whoſe ſeat in the wild and hilly part of Staffordſhire Moorlands is eminent for its boldly romantic features, Dr. Darwin wrote an addreſs to its owner, from the Naiad of that ſcene. Her rivulet originally took its courſe along the deep bottom of cradling woods, luxuriantly clothing the ſteeply-ſloping mountains, which a rough glen, and this it's brook, divided.

Mr. Sneyd

Mr. Sneyd cauſed the rough and tangled glen to be cleared and hollowed into one entire baſin, which the brook immediately filled with the pureſt and moſt tranſparent water. Only a very narrow, marginal path is left on each ſide, between the water and thoſe high woody mountains which ſhut the liquid ſcene from every other earthly object. This lake covers more than five acres, yet is not more than ſeventy yards acroſs at the broadeſt part. The length is, therefore, conſiderable. It gradually narrows on it's flow, till ſuddenly, and with loud noiſe, it is precipitated down a craggy, darkling, and nearly perpendicular fall of forty feet. The ſtream then takes its natural channel, loſing itſelf in the ſombre and pathleſs woods which ſtretch far onward.

While we walk on the brink of this liquid concave; while we liſten to the roar, with which the tumbling torrent paſſes

away; while we look up, on each ſide, to the umbrageous eminences, which leave us only themſelves, the water, and the ſky, we are impreſſed with a ſenſe of ſolemn ſecluſion, and might fancy ourſelves in the ſolitudes of Tinian or Juan-Fernandes. The trees and ſhrubs which, from ſuch great elevation, impend over the flood, give it their own green tint without leſſening its tranſparency. Glaſſy ſmooth, this lake has not a wave till within a few yards of its precipitance. But it is time to introduce Dr. Darwin's verſes, already mentioned. They were written before the exiſtence of the Lake, and while the brook, which formed it, had the ſilence imputed to it by the poet.

Addreſs of a Water Nymph, at Belmont, to the Owner of that place.

O! Friend to Peace and Virtue, ever flows
For thee my ſilent and unſullied ſtream,

Pure

Pure and untainted as thy blameleſs life!
Let no gay converſe lead thy ſteps aſtray
To mix my chaſte wave with immodeſt wine,
Nor with the poiſonous cup, which Chemia's hand
Deals, fell enchantreſs, to the ſons of folly!
So ſhall young Health thy daily walks attend,
Weave for thy hoary brow the vernal flower
Of cheerfulneſs, and with his nervous arm
Arreſt th' inexorable ſcythe of Time.

The exhortation was not diſobeyed; the benediction was not fruitleſs. Mr. Sneyd ſtill lives to exhilarate the ſpirits of his friends, and to be the bleſſing of his neighbourhood. The duties of a public magiſtrate, exerted with energy, and tempered with kindneſs; the hoſpitality of his ſocial manſion; his purſuit of natural hiſtory, and taſte for the arts, are unleſſened by time, and no corporal infirmity allays their enjoyment. After a lapſe of ſeventy years he paſſes ſeveral hours every day, in all ſeaſons when the weather is dry, in the open air, forming for his ſcenes new plans

of cultivation and ornament. Look at Mr. Sneyd, ye young men of fortune, and reflect upon the robuſt and happy conſequence of youthful ſobriety, of religion, morality, and a cultivated mind!

" The age of *ſuch* is as a luſty winter,
" Froſty, but kindly.

In the ſpring of the year 1778 the children of Colonel and Mrs. Pole of Radburn, in Derbyſhire, had been injured by a dangerous quantity of the cicuta, injudiciouſly adminiſtered to them in the hooping-cough, by a phyſician of the neighbourhood. Mrs. Pole brought them to the houſe of Dr. Darwin, in Lichfield, remaining with them there a few weeks, till, by his art, the poiſon was expelled from their conſtitutions, and their health reſtored.

Mrs. Pole was then in the full bloom of her youth and beauty. Agreeable features;

tures; the glow of health; a faſcinating ſmile; a fine form, tall and graceful; playful ſprightlineſs of manners; a benevolent heart, and maternal affection, in all its unwearied cares and touching tenderneſs, contributed to inſpire Dr. Darwin's admiration, and to ſecure his eſteem. Soon after ſhe left Lichfield, with her renovated little ones, their reſtorer ſent to his friend, Mr. Bolton of Birmingham, the following directions for making a tea-vaſe, deſigned as a preſent from the Doctor to Mrs. Pole.

Friend Bolton, take theſe ingots fine
From rich Potoſi's ſparkling mine;
With your nice art a tea-vaſe mould,
Your art, more valu'd than the gold.
With orient pearl, in letters white,
Around it, "To the Faireſt," write;
And, where proud Radburn's turrets riſe,
To bright Eliza ſend the prize.

I'll have no bending ſerpents kiſs
The foaming wave, and ſeem to hiſs;

No

No ſprawling dragons gape with ire,
And ſnort out ſteam, and vomit fire;
No Naiads weep; no ſphinxes ſtare;
No tail-hung dolphins ſwim in air.
Let leaves of myrtle round the rim,
With roſe-buds twiſting, ſhade the brim;
Each ſide let woodbine ſtalks deſcend,
And form the branches as they bend;
While on the foot a Cupid ſtands
And twines the wreath with both his hands.

Perch'd on the riſing lid above,
O place a lovelorn, turtle dove,
With hanging wing, and ruffled plume,
With gaſping beak, and eye of gloom.

Laſt, let the ſwelling boſſes ſhine
With ſilver, white, and burniſh'd fine,
Bright as the fount, whoſe banks beſide
Narciſſus gaz'd, and lov'd, and died.

Vaſe, when Eliza deigns to pour,
With ſnowy hand, thy boiling ſhower;
And ſweetly talks, and ſmiles, and ſips
The fragrant ſteam, with ruby lips,
More charms thy poliſh'd orb ſhall ſhew
Than Titian's glowing pencil drew;
More than *his* chiſel ſoft unfurl'd,
Whoſe heav'n-wrought ſtatue charms the world.

Soon

Soon after the compoſition of theſe gallant verſes to Mrs. Pole, circumſtances aroſe which gave riſe to the following ode, not leſs beautiful, though much leſs gay.

Fly, gentle ſteeds!—o'er yon unfriendly towers
Malignant ſtars, with baleful influence reign;
Cold Beauty's frown infects the cheerleſs hours,
And Avarice dwells in Love's polluted fane!

Dim, diſtant towers! whoſe ample roof protects
All that my beating boſom holds ſo dear,
Far ſhining lake! whoſe ſilver wave reflects
Of Nature's faireſt forms, the form moſt fair;

Groves, where at noon the ſleeping Beauty lies;
Lawns, where at eve her graceful footſteps rove;
For ye full oft have heard my ſecret ſighs,
And caught unſeen, the tear of hopeleſs love;

Farewell! a long farewell!—your ſhades among
No more theſe eyes ſhall drink Eliza's charms;
No more theſe ears the muſic of her tongue!—
O! doom'd for ever to another's arms!

Fly,

Fly, gentle ſteeds!—my bleeding heart convey
Where brighter ſcenes and milder planets ſhine;
Where Joy's white pinion glitters in the ray,
And Love ſits ſmiling on his cryſtal ſhrine!

About the ſummer 1778 the Counteſs of Northeſk reſted at one of the inns in Lichfield, on her way to Scotland by the ſhorteſt poſſible ſtages. She had been a year in England, for the benefit of her health, waſting rapidly by hemorrhage. Ineffectually had the moſt eminent phyſicians of London and Bath endeavoured to check the progreſs of her diſeaſe. Her youngeſt daughter, Lady Marianne Carnegie, then an amiable girl of thirteen, now alas no more, and their friend, Mrs. Scott, were the companions of Lady Northeſk's journey. Her ladyſhip told the miſtreſs of the inn that ſhe was going home to die, the phyſicians having confeſſed that art could do no more in

in her caſe. The perſon replied, "I wiſh, "Madam, that you would ſend for *our* "Doctor, he is ſo famous." Lady Northeſk conſented.

When Dr. Darwin came, he obſerved that he could do little on tranſient obſervation, where the diſeaſe was ſo obſtinate, and of ſuch long continuance; preſſed her to remove with her daughter and friend to his houſe, and that they would remain his gueſts during a fortnight. The invitation was accepted. He requeſted the author of theſe memoirs frequently to viſit his new patient, contribute to amuſe her, and abate the inevitable injury of perpetual ſelf-attention.

Miſs Seward felt herſelf extremely intereſted in this lady, and anxious to ſee thoſe ſufferings relieved which were ſo patiently ſuſtained. Lady Northeſk lay on a couch, through the day, in Dr. Darwin's parlour, drawing with difficulty that breath, which ſeemed

ſeemed often on the point of final evaporation. She was thin, even to tranſparency; her cheeks ſuffuſed at times with a fluſh, beautiful, though hectic. Her eyes remarkably lucid and full of intelligence. If the languor of diſeaſe frequently overſhadowed them, they were always relumined by every obſervation to which ſhe liſtened, on lettered excellence, on the powers of ſcience, or the ingenuity of art. Her language, in the high Scotch accent, had every happineſs of perſpicuity, and always expreſſed rectitude of heart and ſuſceptibility of taſte.

Whenever her great and friendly phyſician perceived his patient's attention engaged by the converſation of the reſt of the circle, he ſat conſidering her in meditative ſilence, with looks that expreſſed,— "You ſhall not die thus prematurely, if "my efforts can prevent it."

One evening, after a long and intenſe

reverie, he ſaid,—" Lady Northeſk, an art
" was practiſed in former years, which
" the medical world has very long diſuſed;
" that of injecting blood into the veins by
" a ſyringe, and thus repairing the waſte
" of diſeaſes like yours. Human blood,
" and that of calves and ſheep, were
" uſed promiſcuouſly. Superſtition at-
" tached impiety to the practice. It was
" put a ſtop to in England by a bull of
" excommunication from ſome of our
" Popiſh Princes, againſt the practitioners
" of ſanguinary injection.—That it had
" been practiſed with ſucceſs, we may,
" from this interdiction, fairly conclude;
" elſe reſtraint upon its continuance muſt
" have been ſuperfluous. We have a very
" ingenious watch-maker here, whom I
" think I could inſtruct to form a proper
" inſtrument for the purpoſe, if you choſe
" to ſubmit to the experiment."—She
replied cheerfully, " that ſhe had not
" the

"the leaſt objection, if he thought it "eligible."

Miſs Seward then ſaid—"If the trial "ſhould be determined upon, perhaps "Lady Northeſk would prefer a ſupply "from an healthy human ſubject, rather "than from an animal. My health is "perfect, neither am I conſcious of any "lurking diſeaſe, hereditary or accidental. "I have no dread of the lancet, and will "gladly ſpare, from time to time, ſuch a "portion from my veins to Lady Northeſk, "as Dr. Darwin ſhall think proper to "inject."

He ſeemed much pleaſed with the propoſal, and his amiable patient expreſſed gratitude far above the juſt claim of the circumſtance. Dr. Darwin ſaid he would conſult his pillow upon it.

The next day, when Miſs S. called upon Lady N. the Doctor took her previouſly into his ſtudy, telling her, that he had

had reſigned all thoughts of trying the experiment upon Lady Northeſk; that it had occurred to him as a laſt reſource, to ſave an excellent woman, whoſe diſorder, he feared, was beyond the reach of medicine; "but," added he, "the con-"ſtruction of a proper machine is ſo nice "an affair, the leaſt failure in its power "of acting ſo hazardous, the chance at "laſt from the experiment, ſo precarious, "that I do not chooſe to ſtake my reputa-"tion upon the riſque. If ſhe die, the "world will ſay I killed Lady Northeſk, "though the London and Bath phyſicians "have pronounced her caſe hopeleſs, and "ſent her home to expire. They have "given her a great deal too much medicine. "I ſhall give her very little. Their ſyſtem "of nutritious food, their gravy jellies, and "ſtrong wines, I have already changed for "milk, vegetables, and fruit. No wines ever; "no meat, no ſtrong broth, at preſent. If

"this alteration of diet prove unavailing, "her family and friends muſt loſe her."

It was not unavailing; ſhe gathered ſtrength under the change from day to day. The diſeaſe abated, and in three weeks time ſhe purſued her journey to Scotland, a convaleſcent, full of hope for herſelf; of grateful veneration towards her phyſician, whoſe reſcuing ſkill had ſaved her from the grave; and full, alſo, of over-rating thankfulneſs to Miſs S. for the offer ſhe had made. With *her*, Lady Northeſk regularly correſponded from that time till her ſudden and deplorable death. All Lady N.'s letters ſpoke of completely recovered health and ſtrength. She ſent Miſs Seward a preſent of ſome beautiful Scotch pebbles for a necklace, picked up by her own hands, in her Lord's park, and poliſhed at Edinburgh.

Lady Northeſk might have lived to old age, the bleſſing of her family and friends. Alas!

Alas! the time had paſſed by in which Miſs Seward was accuſtomed to expect a letter from her friend!

Inquiry taught her that Lady Northeſk had periſhed by the dreadfully-frequent accident of having ſet fire to her clothes. Lady Marianne Carnegie wrote to Miſs S. the year after, and continued to honor her with ſeveral letters while her Ladyſhip lived with her father at Ethic Houſe, on the ocean's edge. It was there that ſhe dedicated many of her youthful years to the pious endeavour of mitigating Lord Northeſk's deep anguiſh for the loſs of his Lady, which had induced him inflexibly to renounce all ſociety, except with his own family. That might be ſaid of Ethic Houſe which Dr. Johnſon ſaid of the Iſle of Raaſay, in the Hebrides. "*Without* "were the dark rocks, the roaring winds, "and tumultuous deep;" but, alas for Lady Marianne! it could not alſo be ſaid,

as of Raaſay, that "*within* were the "ſocial comforts, the voice of gaiety, the "dance, and the ſong." Yet did ſhe ſupport, with uncomplaining patience, in the flower of her youth, this deep ſolitude; this monotony of natural objects, in which little variety could be found, beyond the change of ſmiling and frowning ſeas, the huſhed and the bellowing waters.

In the autumn of this year Mrs. Pole of Radburn was taken ill; her diſorder a violent fever. Dr. Darwin was called in, and perhaps never, ſince the death of Mrs. Darwin, preſcribed with ſuch deep anxiety. Not being requeſted to continue in the houſe through the enſuing night, which he apprehended might prove critical, he paſſed the remaining hours till day-dawn beneath a tree oppoſite her apartment, watching the paſſing and repaſſing lights in the chamber. During the period in which a life he ſo paſſionately valued was

in danger, he paraphraſed Petrarch's celebrated ſonnet, narrating a dream, whoſe prophecy was accompliſhed by the death of Laura. It took place the night on which the viſion aroſe amid his ſlumber. Dr. Darwin extended the thoughts of that ſonnet into the following elegy.

Dread Dream, that, hovering in the midnight air,
Claſp'd, with thy duſky wing, my aching head,
While, to Imagination's ſtartled ear,
Toll'd the ſlow bell, for bright Eliza dead.

Stretch'd on her ſable bier, the grave beſide,
A ſnow-white ſhroud her breathleſs boſom bound,
O'er her wan brow the *mimic knot* was tied,
And Loves, and Virtues, hung their garlands round.

From thoſe cold lips did ſofteſt accents flow?
Round that pale mouth did ſweeteſt dimples play?
On this dull cheek the roſe of beauty blow,
And thoſe dim eyes diffuſe celeſtial day?

Did this cold hand unaſking want relieve,
Or wake the lyre to every rapturous ſound?
How ſad, for other's woe, this breaſt would heave!
How light this heart, for other's tranſport, bound!

Beats not the bell again?—Heav'ns! do I wake?
Why heave my ſighs, why guſh my tears anew?
Unreal forms my trembling doubts miſtake,
And frantic Sorrow fears the viſion true.

Dream! to Eliza bend thy airy flight,
Go, tell my charmer all my tender fears,
How Love's fond woes alarm the ſilent night,
And ſteep my pillow in unpitied tears.

The ſecond verſe of this charming elegy affords an inſtance of Dr. Darwin's too excluſive devotion to diſtinct picture in poetry; that it ſometimes betrayed him into bringing objects ſo preciſely to the eye, as to loſe in ſuch preciſion their power of ſtriking forcibly upon the heart. The pathos in that ſecond verſe is injured by the words, "*mimic lace,*" which allude to the perforated borders of the ſhroud. The expreſſion is too minute for the ſolemnity of the ſubject. Certainly it cannot be natural for a ſhocked and agitated mind to obſerve, or to deſcribe with ſuch petty accuracy. Beſides the

the allusion is not sufficiently obvious. The reader pauses to consider what the poet means by "*mimic lace.*" Such pauses deaden sensation, and break the course of attention. A friend of the Doctor's pleaded strongly that the line might run thus,

"On her wan brow the *shadowy crape* was tied;"

but the alteration was rejected. Inattention to the rules of grammar in the first verse, was also pointed out to him at the same time. The dream is addressed,

"Dread dream; that clasped my aching head,"

but nothing is said to it; and therefore the sense is left unfinished, while the elegy proceeds to give a picture of the lifeless beauty. The same friend suggested a change, which would have remedied the defect, thus,

"Dread *was the dream*, that, in the midnight air,
"Clasp'd, with it's dusky wing, my aching head,
"While to, &c."

Hence, not only the grammatic error would have been done away, but the grating ſound, produced by the near alliteration of the harſh *dr*, in "*dr*ead *dr*eam," removed, by placing thoſe words at a greater diſtance from each other.

This alteration was, for the ſame reaſon, rejected. The Doctor would not ſpare the word *hovering*, which he ſaid ſtrengthened the picture; but ſurely the image ought not to be elaborately preciſe, by which a dream is transformed into an animal, with black wings.

Soon after Mrs. Pole's recovery from her dangerous illneſs, Dr. Darwin wrote the following little poem.

ODE TO THE RIVER DERWENT,

Written in a romantic Valley near its ſource.

Derwent, what ſcenes thy wandering waves behold,
As burſting from thine hundred ſprings they ſtray,
And down theſe vales, in ſounding torrents roll'd,
Seek to the ſhining Eaſt their mazy way!

Here

Here duſky alders, leaning from the cliff,
Dip their long arms, and wave their branches wide;
There, as the looſe rocks thwart my bounding ſkiff,
White moonbeams tremble on the foaming tide.

Paſs on, ye waves, where, dreſs'd in laviſh pride,
'Mid roſeate bowers, the gorgeous Chatſworth beams,
Spreads her ſmooth lawns along your willowy ſide,
And eyes her gilded turrets in your ſtreams.

Paſs on, ye waves, where Nature's rudeſt child,
Frowning incumbent o'er the darken'd floods,
Rock rear'd on rock, mountain on mountain pil'd,
Old Matlock ſits, and ſhakes his creſt of woods.

But when fair Derby's ſtately towers you view,
Where his bright meads your ſparkling currents drink,
O! ſhould Eliza preſs the morning dew,
And bend her graceful footſteps to your brink,

Uncurl your eddies, ſtill your gales confine,
And, as your ſcaly nations gaze around,
Bid your gay nymphs pourtray, with pencil fine,
Her radiant form upon your ſilver ground.

With playful malice, from her kindling cheek
Steal the warm bluſh, and tinge your paſſing ſtream;
Mock the ſweet tranſient dimples, as ſhe ſpeaks,
And, as ſhe turns her eye, reflect the beam!

And

temperature of the air alone that the ſeaſons can be aſcertained; ſince there are no trees, to mark by their foliage the reign of ſylvan beauty; no graſs, to denote it by its lively hue. Nothing but the grey, the barren, and lonely rocks, with, perhaps, a few ſtraggling Scotch firs waving on the tops of the cliffs above; and their duſky ſprays neither winter ſtrips nor ſpring enlivens.

This dale is, indeed, "Peak's rudeſt "child." Of late years, injury has been done to the towery and fantaſtic forms of many of the rocks, from their having been broken in pieces by gunpowder exploſion, for the ſake of mending the turnpike roads. The mills, for ſmelting the lead-ore in this dale, blot the ſummer noon, and increaſe its ſultrineſs by thoſe volumes of black ſmoke which pour out from their chimnies; but in the night they have a grand effect, from the flare of

of the pointed flames, which ſtream amid the ſmoke, and appear like ſo many ſmall volcanos.

Mr. Longſton, of Eyam, has adorned a part of this ſcene by a hanging garden and imitative fort. The ſteep, winding paths of the garden are planted with wild ſhrubs, natives of the ſteril ſoil, and which root their fibres in the fiſſures of the rocks. The effect, in deſcending thoſe paths from the cliffs above, is very ſtriking. They command the ſtupendous depths of the vale below and a conſiderable portion of its curve.

About the year 1777, Dr. Darwin purchaſed a little, wild, umbrageous valley, a mile from Lichfield, amongſt the only rocks which neighbour that city ſo nearly. It was irriguous from various ſprings, and ſwampy from their plenitude. A moſſy fountain, of the pureſt and coldeſt water imaginable, had, near a century back, induced

duced the inhabitants of Lichfield to build a cold bath in the boſom of the vale. *That,* till the doctor took it into his poſſeſſion, was the only mark of human induſtry which could be found in the tangled and ſequeſtered ſcene.

One of its native features had long excited the attention of the curious; a rock, which, in the central depth of the glen, drops perpetually, about three times in a minute. Aquatic plants border its top and branch from its fiſſures. No length of ſummer drought abates, no rains increaſe its humidity, no froſt congeals its droppings. The Doctor cultivated this ſpot,

"And Paradiſe was open'd in the wild."

In ſome parts he widened the brook into ſmall lakes, that mirrored the valley; in others, he taught it to wind between ſhrubby margins. Not only with trees of various

various growth did he adorn the borders of the fountain, the brook, and the lakes, but with various claſſes of plants, uniting the Linnean ſcience with the charm of landſcape.

For the Naiad of the fountain, he wrote the following inſcription.

SPEECH OF A WATER NYMPH.

If the meek flower of baſhful dye,
Attract not thy incurious eye;
If the ſoft, murmuring rill to reſt
Encharm not thy tumultuous breaſt,
Go, where Ambition lures the vain,
Or Avarice barters peace for gain!

Dr. Darwin reſtrained his friend Miſs Seward's ſteps to this her always favourite ſcene till it had aſſumed its new beauties from cultivation. He purpoſed accompanying her on her firſt viſit to his botanic garden, but a medical ſummons into the country deprived her of that pleaſure.

pleaſure. She took her tablets and pencil, and, ſeated on a flower-bank, in the midſt of that luxuriant retreat, wrote the following lines, while the ſun was gilding the glen, and while birds, of every plume, poured their ſong from the boughs.

O, come not here, ye Proud, whoſe breaſts infold
Th' inſatiate wiſh of glory, or of gold;
O come not ye, whoſe branded foreheads wear
Th' eternal frown of envy, or of care;
For you no Dryad decks her fragrant bowers,
For you her ſparkling urn no Naiad pours;
Unmark'd by you light Graces ſkim the green,
And hovering Cupids aim their ſhafts unſeen.

But, thou! whoſe mind the well-attemper'd ray
Of Taſte, and Virtue, lights with purer day;
Whoſe finer ſenſe each ſoft vibration owns,
Mute and unfeeling to diſcorded tones;
Like the fair flower that ſpreads its lucid form
To meet the ſun, but ſhuts it to the ſtorm;
For thee my borders nurſe the glowing wreath,
My fountains murmur, and my zephyrs breathe;
My painted birds their vivid plumes unfold,
And inſect armies wave their wings of gold.

And

And if with thee ſome hapleſs maid ſhould ſtray,
Diſaſtrous love companion of her way,
O lead her timid ſtep to yonder glade,
Whoſe weeping rock incumbent alders ſhade!
There, as meek Evening wakes the temperate breeze,
And moonbeams glimmer through the trembling trees,
The rills, that gurgle round, ſhall ſooth her ear,
The weeping rock ſhall number tear for tear;
And as ſad Philomel, alike forlorn,
Sings to the night, reclining on her thorn,
While, at ſweet intervals, each falling note
Sighs in the gale, and whiſpers round the grot,
The ſiſter-woe ſhall calm her aching breaſt,
And ſofteſt ſlumbers ſteal her cares to reſt.

Thus ſpoke the *Genius as he ſtept along,
And bade theſe lawns to Peace and Truth belong;
Down the ſteep ſlopes he led, with modeſt ſkill,
The graſſy pathway and the vagrant rill;
Stretch'd o'er the marſhy vale the willowy mound,
Where ſhines the lake amid the cultur'd ground;
Rais'd the young woodland, ſmooth'd the wavy green,
And gave to Beauty all the quiet ſcene.

O! may no ruder ſtep theſe bowers prophane,
No midnight waſſailers deface the plain;

* By the Genius of the place is meant its firſt cultivator, Dr. Darwin.

And when the tempeſts of the wintry day
Blow golden Autumn's varied leaves away,
Winds of the North, reſtrain your icy gales,
Nor chill the boſom of theſe HALLOWED VALES! *

When Miſs Seward gave this little poem to Dr. Darwin, he ſeemed pleaſed with it, and ſaid, "I ſhall ſend it to the "periodical publications; but it ought to "form the exordium of a great work. "The Linnean Syſtem is unexplored poetic "ground, and an happy ſubject for the "muſe. It affords fine ſcope for poetic "landſcape; it ſuggeſts metamorphoſes "of the Ovidian kind, though reverſed. "Ovid made men and women into flowers, "plants, and trees. You ſhould make

* Theſe verſes, in their original ſtate, as inſcribed here, will be found in Mr. Shaw's Hiſtory of Staffordſhire, publiſhed in 1798, near four years before the death of Dr. Darwin; ſee Article *Lichfield*, page 347. Their author choſe to aſſert her claim to them in the Doctor's lifetime, ſince they had appeared in the periodical Publications many years before the Botanic Garden paſſed the preſs, and had borne her ſignature.

"flowers,

" flowers, plants, and trees, into men and " women. I," continued he, " will write " the notes, which muſt be ſcientific; and " you ſhall write the verſe."

Miſs S. obſerved, that, beſides her want of botanic knowledge, the plan was not ſtrictly proper for a female pen; that ſhe felt how eminently it was adapted to the efflorescence of his own fancy.

He objected the profeſſional danger of coming forward an acknowledged poet. It was pleaded, that on his firſt commencing medical profeſſor, there might have been no danger; but that, beneath the unbounded confidence his experienced ſkill in medicine had obtained from the public, all riſque of injury by reputation flowing in upon him from a new ſource was precluded; eſpecially ſince the ſubject of the poetry, and ſtill more the notes, would be connected with pathology.

Dr. Darwin took his friend's advice,

and very ſoon began his great poetic work; but previouſly, a few weeks after they were compoſed, ſent the verſes Miſs S. wrote in his Botanic Garden, to the Gentleman's Magazine, and in her name. From thence they were copied in the Annual Regiſter; but, without conſulting her, he had ſubſtituted for the laſt ſix lines, eight of his own. He afterwards, and again without the knowledge of their author, made them the exordium to the firſt part of his poem, publiſhed, for certain reaſons, ſome years after the ſecond part had appeared. No acknowledgment was made that thoſe verſes were the work of another pen. Such acknowledgment ought to have been made, eſpecially ſince they paſſed the preſs in the name of their real author. They are ſomewhat altered in the exordium to Dr. Darwin's Poem, and eighteen lines of his own are interwoven with them.

In

In September 1780, a playful correſpondence paſſed between Dr. Darwin and Miſs Seward, in the name of their reſpective cats. The ſubject was ludicrous as it was ſingular, but the mock-heroic reſult pleaſed very generally, as the permiſſion of taking copies had been ſolicited and obtained by ſeveral of their acquaintance. Some literary friends of the writer of theſe pages, remembering the bagatelles with pleaſure, perſuaded her to inſert them. She is apprehenſive that they may be conſidered as below the dignity which a biographic ſketch of deceaſed Eminence ought perhaps to preſerve; yet, as in this whimſically gay effuſion, Dr. Darwin appears in a new light of comic wit and ſportive ingenuity, ſhe ventures to comply with their requeſt.

From the Perſian Snow, at Dr. Darwin's, to Miſs Po Felina, at the Palace, Lichfield.

Lichfield Vicarage, Sept. 7, 1780.

Dear Miſs Puſſey,

As I ſat, the other day, baſking myſelf in the Dean's Walk, I ſaw you, in your ſtately palace, waſhing your beautiful round face, and elegantly brinded ears, with your velvet paws, and whiſking about, with graceful ſinuoſity, your meandering tail. That treacherous hedgehog, Cupid, concealed himſelf behind your tabby beauties, and darting one of his too well aimed quills, pierced, O cruel imp! my fluttering heart.

Ever ſince that fatal hour have I watched, day and night, in my balcony, hoping that the ſtillneſs of the ſtarlight evenings

evenings might induce you to take the air on the leads of the palace. Many ſerenades have I ſung under your windows; and, when you failed to appear, with the ſound of my voice made the vicarage re-echo through all its winding lanes and dirty alleys. All heard me but my cruel Fair-one; ſhe, wrapped in fur, ſat purring with contented inſenſibility, or ſlept with untroubled dreams.

Though I cannot boaſt thoſe delicate varieties of melody with which you ſometimes raviſh the ear of night, and ſtay the liſtening ſtars; though you ſleep hourly on the lap of the favourite of the muſes, and are patted by thoſe fingers which hold the pen of ſcience; and every day, with her permiſſion, dip your white whiſkers in delicious cream; yet am I not deſtitute of all advantages of birth, education, and beauty. Derived from Perſian kings, my ſnowy fur yet retains

the whiteneſs and ſplendor of their ermine.

This morning, as I ſat upon the Doctor's tea-table, and ſaw my reflected features in the ſlop-baſin, my long white whiſkers, ivory teeth, and topaz eyes, I felt an agreeable preſentiment of my ſuit; and certainly the ſlop-baſin did not flatter me, which ſhews the azure flowers upon its borders leſs beauteous than they are.

You know not, dear Miſs Puſſey Po, the value of the addreſs you neglect. New milk have I, in flowing abundance, and mice pent up in twenty garrets, for your food and amuſement.

Permit me, this afternoon, to lay at your divine feet the head of an enormous Norway Rat, which has even now ſtained my paws with its gore. If you will do me the honor to ſing the following ſong, which I have taken the liberty to write, as expreſſing the ſentiments I wiſh you to enter-

entertain, I will bring a band of catgut and catcall, to accompany you in chorus.

Air :—ſpirituoſi.

Cats I ſcorn, who, ſleek and fat,
Shiver at a Norway rat;
Rough and hardy, bold and free,
Be the cat that's made for me!
He, whoſe nervous paw can take
My lady's lapdog by the neck;
With furious hiſs attack the hen,
And ſnatch a chicken from the pen.
If the treacherous ſwain ſhould prove
Rebellious to my tender love,
My ſcorn the vengeful paw ſhall dart,
Shall tear his fur, and pierce his heart.

Chorus.

Qu-ow, wow, quall, wawl, moon.

Deign, moſt adorable charmer, to put your aſſent to this my requeſt, and believe me to be with the profoundeſt reſpect, your true admirer.

Snow*.

* The cat, to whom the above letter was addreſſed, had been broken of her propenſity to kill birds, and lived ſeveral

Anſwer.

Palace, Lichfield,
Sept. 8, 1780.

I am but too ſenſible of the charms of Mr. Snow; but while I admire the ſpotleſs whiteneſs of his ermine, and the tyger-ſtrength of his commanding form, I ſigh in ſecret, that he, who ſucked the milk of benevolence and philoſophy, ſhould yet retain the extreme of that fierceneſs, too juſtly imputed to the Grimalkin race. Our hereditary violence is perhaps commendable when we exert it againſt the foes of our protectors, but deſerves much blame when it annoys their friends.

The happineſs of a refined education

ſeveral years without moleſting a dove, a tame lark, and a redbreaſt, all which uſed to fly about the room where the cat was daily admitted. The dove frequently ſat on puſſey's back, and the little birds would peck fearleſsly from the plate in which ſhe was eating.

was

was mine; yet, dear Mr. Snow, my advantages in that reſpect were not equal to what yours might have been: but, while you give unbounded indulgence to your carnivorous deſires, I have ſo far ſubdued mine, that the lark pours his mattin ſong, the canarybird warbles wild and loud, and the robin pipes his farewell ſong to the ſetting ſun, unmoleſted in my preſence; nay, the plump and tempting dove has repoſed ſecurely upon my ſoft back, and bent her gloſſy neck in graceful curves as ſhe walked around me.

But let me haſten to tell thee how my ſenſibilities in thy favor were, laſt month, unfortunately repreſſed. Once, in the noon of one of its moſt beautiful nights, I was invited abroad by the ſerenity of the amorous hour, ſecretly ſtimulated by the hope of meeting my admired Perſian. With ſilent ſteps I paced around the dimly-gleaming leads of the palace. I had

acquired

acquired a taſte for ſcenic beauty and poetic imagery, by liſtening to ingenious obſervations upon their nature from the lips of thy own lord, as I lay purring at the feet of my miſtreſs.

I admired the lovely ſcene, and breathed my ſighs for thee to the liſtening moon. She threw the long ſhadows of the majeſtic cathedral upon the ſilvered lawn. I beheld the pearly meadows of Stow Valley, and the lake in its boſom, which, reflecting the lunar rays, ſeemed a ſheet of diamonds. The trees of the Dean's Walk, which the hand of Dulneſs had been reſtrained from torturing into trim and deteſtable regularity, met each other in a thouſand various and beautiful forms. Their liberated boughs danced on the midnight gale, and the edges of their leaves were whitened by the moonbeams. I deſcended to the lawn, that I might throw the beauties of the valley into

perſpective

perſpective through the graceful arches, formed by their meeting branches. Suddenly my ear was ſtartled, not by the voice of my lover, but by the loud and diſſonant noiſe of the war-ſong, which ſix black grimalkins were raiſing in honor of the numerous victories obtained by the Perſian, Snow; compared with which, they acknowledged thoſe of Engliſh cats had little brilliance, eclipſed, like the unimportant victories of the Howes, by the puiſſant Clinton and Arbuthnot, and the ſtill more puiſſant Cornwallis. It ſung that thou didſt owe thy matchleſs might to thy lineal deſcent from the invincible Alexander, as he derived his more than mortal valour from his mother Olympia's illicit commerce with Jupiter. They ſung that, amid the renowned ſiege of Perſepolis, while Roxana and Statira were contending for the honour of his attentions, the conqueror of the world deigned

to beſtow them upon a large white female cat, thy grandmother, warlike Mr. Snow, in the ten thouſandth and ninety-ninth aſcent.

Thus far their triumphant din was muſic to my ear; and even when it ſung that lakes of milk ran curdling into whey, within the ebon concave of their pancheons, with terror at thine approach; that mice ſquealed from all the neighbouring garrets; and that whole armies of Norway rats, crying out amain, "the "devil take the hindmoſt," ran violently into the minſter-pool, at the firſt gleam of thy white mail through the ſhrubs of Mr. Howard's garden.

But O! when they ſung, or rather yelled, of larks warbling on ſunbeams, faſcinated ſuddenly by the glare of thine eyes, and falling into thy remorſeleſs talons; of robins, warbling ſoft and ſolitary upon the leafleſs branch, till the pale cheek of winter dimpled into joy; of hundreds of thoſe bright

bright breaſted ſongſters, torn from their barren ſprays by thy pitileſs fangs!—Alas! my heart died within me at the idea of ſo prepoſterous a union!

Marry you, Mr. Snow, I am afraid I cannot; ſince, though the laws of our community might not oppoſe our connection, yet thoſe of principle, of delicacy, of duty to my miſtreſs, do very powerfully oppoſe it.

As to preſiding at your concert, if you extremely wiſh it, I may perhaps grant your requeſt; but then you muſt allow me to ſing a ſong of my own compoſition, applicable to our preſent ſituation, and ſet to muſic by my ſiſter Sophy at Mr. Brown's the organiſt's, thus,

Air :—affettuoſo.

He, whom Puſſy Po detains
A captive in her ſilken chains,
Muſt curb the furious thirſt of prey,
Nor rend the warbler from his ſpray!

Nor

Nor let his wild, ungenerous rage
An unprotected foe engage.

O, ſhould cat of Darwin prove
Foe to pity, foe to love!
Cat, that liſtens day by day,
To mercy's mild and honied lay,
Too ſurely would the dire diſgrace
More deeply brand our future race,
The ſtigma fix, where'er they range,
That cats can ne'er their nature change.

Should I conſent with thee to wed,
Theſe ſanguine crimes upon thy head,
And ere the wiſh'd reform I ſee,
Adieu to lapping Seward's tea!
Adieu to purring gentle praiſe
Charm'd as ſhe quotes thy maſter's lays!—
Could I, alas! our kittens bring
Where ſweet her plumy favorites ſing,
Would not the watchful nymph eſpy
Their father's fierceneſs in their eye,
And drive us far and wide away,
In cold and lonely barn to ſtray?
Where the dark owl, with hideous ſcream,
Shall mock our yells for forfeit cream,
As on ſtarv'd mice we ſwearing dine,
And grumble that our lives are nine.

Chorus:—largo.
Waal, woee, trone, moan, mall, oll, moule.

The

The ſtill too much admired Mr. Snow will have the goodneſs to pardon the freedom of theſe expoſtulations, and excuſe their imperfections. The morning, O Snow! had been devoted to this my correſpondence with thee, but I was interrupted in that employment by the viſit of two females of our ſpecies, who fed my ill-ſtarred paſſion by praiſing thy wit and endowments, exemplified by thy elegant letter, to which the delicacy of my ſentiments obliges me to ſend ſo inauſpicious a reply.

I am, dear Mr. Snow,
Your ever obliged,

Po Felina.

CHAPTER IV.

DURING the courſe of the year 1780, died Colonel Pole. Dr. Darwin, more fortunate than Petrarch, whoſe deſtiny his own had reſembled in poetic endowment and hopeleſs love, then ſaw his adored Laura free, and himſelf at liberty to court her favor, whoſe coldneſs his muſe had recorded; to "drink ſofter effu-"ſion from thoſe eyes," which duty and diſcretion had rendered repulſive. He ſoon, however, ſaw her ſurrounded by rivals, whoſe time of life had nearer parity with her own, yet in its ſummer bloom, while his age nearly approached its half century; whoſe fortunes were affluent and

patrimonial; while his were profeſſional; who were jocund bachelors, while he had children for whom he muſt provide.

Colonel Pole had numbered twice the years of his fair wife. His temper was ſaid to have been peeviſh and ſuſpicious, yet not beneath thoſe circumſtances had her kind and cheerful attentions to him grown cold or remiſs. He left her a jointure of ſix hundred pounds per annum; a ſon to inherit his eſtate, and two female children amply portioned.

Mrs. Pole, it has already been remarked, had much vivacity and ſportive humor, with very engaging frankneſs of temper and manners. Early in her widowhood ſhe was rallied in a large company upon Dr. Darwin's paſſion for her, and was aſked what ſhe would do with her captive philoſopher. "He is not very fond of "churches, I believe, and if he would go "there for my ſake, I ſhall ſcarcely fol-

"low

"low him. He is too old for me."—"Nay, madam, what are fifteen years on "the right ſide?" She replied, with an arch ſmile, "I have had ſo *much* of that "right ſide!"

The confeſſion was thought inauſpicious to the Doctor's hopes; but it did not prove ſo; the triumph of intellect was complete. Without that native perception and awakened taſte for literary excellence, which the firſt charming Mrs. Darwin poſſeſſed, this lady became tenderly ſenſible of the flattering difference between the attachment of a man of genius, and wide celebrity, and that of young fox-hunting eſquires; daſhing militaries, and pedantic gownſmen; for ſhe was ſaid to have ſpecimens of all theſe claſſes in her train. They could ſpeak their own paſſion, but could not immortalize her charms. However benevolent, friendly, and ſweet-tempered, ſhe was not perhaps exactly the woman to have exclaimed with Akenſide,

" Mind, mind alone, bear witneſs earth and heaven!
" The living fountain in itſelf contains
" Of beauteous and ſublime!

Yet did her choice ſupport his axiom when ſhe took Dr. Darwin for her huſband. Darwin, never handſome, or perſonally graceful, with extremely impeded utterance; with hard features on a rough ſurface; older much in appearance than in reality; lame and clumſy!—and this, when half the wealthy youth of Derbyſhire were ſaid to have diſputed the prize with him.

But it was not without ſome ſtipulations, apparently hazardous to his pecuniary intereſt, that Mrs. Pole was perſuaded to deſcend from her Laura-eminence to wifehood, and probably to ſilence for ever, in the repoſe of poſſeſſion, thoſe tender ſtrains, which romantic love and deſpair, and afterwards the ſtimulating reſtleſſneſs of doubtful hope, had occaſionally awakened.

During

During that viſit to Dr. Darwin, in which Mrs. Pole had brought her ſick children to be healed by his ſkill, ſhe had taken a diſlike to Lichfield, and decidedly ſaid, nothing could induce her to live there. His addreſſes did not ſubdue that reſolve.

After ſo long and proſperous a reſidence, to quit that city, central in the Mercian diſtrict, from whence his fame had diffuſed itſelf through the circling counties, ſeemed a great ſacrifice; but the philoſopher was too much in love to heſitate one moment. He married Mrs. Pole in 1781, and removed directly to Derby. His reputation and the unlimited confidence of the public followed him thither, and would have followed him to the metropolis, or to any provincial town, to which he might have choſen to remove.

Why he conſtantly, from time to time, withſtood ſolicitations from countleſs families of rank and opulence, to remove to

London, was never exactly underſtood by the writer of theſe memoirs. She knows that the moſt brilliant proſpects of ſucceſs in the capital were opened to him, from various quarters, early on his reſidence at Lichfield, and that his attention to them was perpetually requeſted by eminent people. Undoubtedly thoſe proſpects acquired added ſtrength and luſtre each year beneath the ever-widening ſpread of his fame. Conſcious of his full habit of body, he probably thought that the eſtabliſhed cuſtom of imbibing changed and pure air by almoſt daily journies into the country, eſſential to his health; perhaps to the duration of his life. In alluſion to that perpetual travelling, a gentleman once humorouſly directed a letter "Dr. Darwin upon the road." When himſelf wrote to Dr. Franklin, complimenting him on having united philoſophy to modern ſcience, he directed his letter merely

merely thus, " Dr. Franklin, America;" and ſaid, he felt inclined to make a ſtill more flattering ſuperſcription. " Dr. " Franklin, the World." His letter reached the ſage, who firſt diſarmed the lightning of its fatal power, for the anſwer to it arrived, and was ſhown in the Darwinian circles; in which had been queſtioned the likelihood of Dr. Franklin ever receiving a letter of ſuch general ſuperſcription as the whole weſtern empire. Its ſafe arrival was amongſt the triumphs of genius combined with exertion, " they " make the *world* their country."

From the time of Dr. Darwin's marriage and removal to Derby, his limited biographer can only trace the outline of his remaining exiſtence; remark the dawn and expanſion of his poetic fame, and comment upon the claims which ſecure its immortality. The leſs does ſhe regret this limitation, as Mr. Dewhurſt Bilſbury, his

his pupil in infancy, his confidential friend, and frequent companion through ripened youth, is now writing at large, the life of Dr. Darwin, who once more became an happy huſband, with a ſecond family of children, ſpringing faſt around him. To thoſe children the Miſs Poles, as themſelves grew up to womanhood, were very meritoriouſly attentive and attached. The eldeſt Miſs Pole married Mr. Bromley, and is ſaid to be happy in her choice of a worthy and amiable man. The ſecond Miſs Pole gave her lovely ſelf to Mr. John Giſborne, younger brother to the celebrated moraliſt and poet of that name.

Mr. John Giſborne's philoſophic energies, poetic genius, extenſive benevolence, ingenuous modeſty, and true piety, render him a pattern for all young men of fortune, and an honor to human nature. In the year 1797, he publiſhed a ſpirited and elegant local poem, entitled, "The Vales of Weaver."

Weaver." It is evidently of the Darwinian ſchool, though in a ſhorter meaſure, and has genius to ſupport the peculiar manner of poetic writing which it emulates and has caught. In this poem we meet appropriate and vivid landſcape. Some of the epithets are perhaps exceptionable, and too free uſe is made of the word *glory* in ſeveral inſtances, particularly in its application to moon-light. Pope's faulty, though admired ſimile, in the laſt paſſage of the 8th book of the Iliad, has miſled ſucceeding poets; inducing them to laviſh upon the lunar effuſions thoſe terms of ſuperlative ſplendor which they ſhould reſerve for the ſun in his ſtrength. The Bard of Twickenham, ſo generally diſcriminating, is indiſcriminate when he ſtyles the moon "refulgent lamp of night," and its white and modeſt beams "a flood of "glory." Scholars ſay, he found no example in the original paſſage for this fun-

defraud-

defrauding magnificence. We do not find it for the moon in Cowper's more literal tranſlation of the Homeric landſcape, two ſins againſt truth pardoned, and the ſcene, as penciled by Cowper, is beautiful; thus:

> As when around the clear, bright moon, the ſtars
> Shine in full ſplendor, and the winds are huſh'd,
> The groves, the mountain tops, the headland heights,
> Stand all apparent; not a vapor ſtreaks
> The boundleſs blue, but æther, open'd wide,
> All glitters, and the ſhepherd's heart is cheer'd.

Surely the original does not ſanction an image which nature never preſents, ſince, when the moon is clear and bright, the ſtars do not ſpangle the firmament plenteouſly, or ſplendidly. A few ſtars, and never more than a few, ſometimes glimmer through her flood of ſnowy and abſorbing light. At any rate, ſplendor is a falſe term. When the night is cloudleſs, and the moon abſent, the ſtellar hoſt glows

and

and ſparkles very brightly; but it's reſulting maſs of light by no means amounts to ſplendor.

Nature hallows, and poetry conſecrates all the moon-light ſcenery in Milton. It is never more charming than in the following inſtance.

——— Now glow'd the firmament
With living ſaphirs. Heſperus, that led
The ſtarry hoſt, rode brighteſt, till the moon,
Riſing in clouded majeſty, o'er all
Apparent queen, unveil'd her peerleſs light,
And o'er the dark her ſilver mantle threw.

Since Pope and Cowper, as tranſlators of Homer, have been brought into a degree of compariſon on theſe pages, the writer of them cannot reſiſt the avowal of her opinion, that, on the whole, and conſidered merely as poems, great ſuperiority is with Pope, as to perſpicuity, elegance, and intereſt; the grace of picture, and the harmony

mony of numbers. In a few ſtriking paſſages Cowper may be the nobler, but his muſe is for ever viſibly and awkwardly ſtruggling for literality, where he ſhould have remembered the painter's adage, "It "is better to ſin againſt truth than "beauty," ſo long as the ſenſe is not perverted, and nature is not outraged by inappropriate epithets, which muſt always injure the diſtinctneſs of imagery and landſcape.

If, in the preceding inſtance, Cowper's moon-light is chaſter than Pope's, ſee how much more grandly the rhyme tranſlation gives the remaining lines of that cloſing paſſage.

So numerous ſeem'd thoſe fires, the bank between
Of Zanthus, blazing, and the fleet of Greece,
In proſpect all of Troy; a thouſand fires
Each watch'd by fifty warriors, ſeated near.
The fleeds beſide the chariot ſtood, their corn
Chewing, and waiting till the golden-thron'd
Aurora ſhould reſtore the light of day.

COWPER'S HOMER, Firſt Edition.

Nothing

Nothing can be more confuſed and unhappy than the language of this paſſage. It is leſt doubtful whether it is the fires that are blazing, or the river that by reflection blazes; and, "the bank between," is ſtrange language for "between the banks." *Chewing* ſeems below the dignity of heroic verſe, and the compound epithet golden-thron'd, fine in itſelf, is ruined as to effect, by cloſing the line when its ſubſtantive begins the next. Obſerve how exempt from all theſe faults is Pope's tranſlation of the ſame paragraph,

So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
And lighten glimmering Zanthus with their rays.
The long reflection of the diſtant fires
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the ſpires.
A thouſand piles the duſky horrors gild,
And ſhoot a ſhady luſtre o'er the field.
Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend,
Whoſe umber'd arms, by fits, thick flaſhes ſend.
Loud neigh the courſers o'er their heaps of corn,
And ardent warriors wait the riſing morn.

Poetry

Poetry has no picture more exquiſite than we meet in the ſecond, third, and fourth lines; but an infinite number, equally vivid and beautiful, riſe to the reader's eye, as it explores the pages of Doctor Darwin's Botanic Garden.

While the powers of metrical landſcape-painting are the theme, not unwelcome to thoſe who feel its inchantment, will be inſtances which muſt prove that they are poſſeſſed by Mr. John Giſborne in a degree which would diſgrace the national taſte if they ſhould be ſuffered to paſs away without their fame. "The Vales of Weaver" is this young man's firſt publication. Beneath thankleſs neglect the efflorescence of a rich imagination will probably ſink blighted, like the opening flowers of the ſpring before an eaſtern mildew, no more to riſe in future compoſitions to the view of that public which had eſtimated ſo coldly the value of the firſt.

We

We have read various deſcriptions of a winter's night, and it's enſuing morning; but the following ſketch is not borrowed from any of them. We feel that it was drawn beneath a lively remembrance of real impreſſion made on the author's mind by the circumſtances themſelves; therefore, it will not fail to touch the vibrating chords of recollected ſenſation in every reader of ſenſibility. Book-made deſcriptions are trite and vapid; but nature is inexhauſtible in her varieties, and will always preſent to the eye of genius either new images, or ſuch combination of images as muſt render them new; and they will riſe on his page in the morning freſhneſs of originality. Theſe ſacred arcana ſhe reſerves for the poet, and leaves the mere verſifier to his dull theſts.

VALES OF WEAVER.

O Wootton! oft I love to hear
Thy wintry whirlwinds, loud and clear;
With dreadful pleaſure bid them fill
My liſtening ear, my boſom chill.

As the ſonorous North aſſails
Weaver's bleak wilds, and leafleſs vales,
With awful majeſty of might
He burſts the billowy clouds of night;
Booms * the reſounding glens among,
And roaring rolls his ſnows along.
In clouds againſt my groaning ſaſh
Broad, feathery flakes inceſſant daſh,
Or wheel below, and mingling form
The frolic pageants of the ſtorm.
Hark! with what aggravated roar
Echo repeats her midnight lore;
Rends her dark ſolitudes and caves,
And bellowing ſhakes the mighty graves †.

Couch'd on her ſeat the timid hare
Liſtens each boiſterous ſweep of air;
Or peeps, yon blaſted furze between,
And eyes the ſnow-bewildered ſcene;
Inſtant retracts her ſhuddering head,
And neſtles cloſer in her bed.
All ſad and ruffled, in the grove
The fieldfare wakes from dreams of love;
Hears the loud north and fleety ſnow,
And views the drifted brakes below;

* A word admirably expreſſing the noiſe of winds, and applied to here for the firſt time in poetry.

† The numerous tumuli on Weaver and the adjacent hills.

Swift

Swift to her wing returns her beak,
And ſhivers as the tempeſts break.
Up ſtarts the village-dog aloof,
And howls beneath his rifted roof;
Looks from his den, and blinking hears
The driving tumult at his ears!
Inſtant withdraws his fearful breaſt,
Shrinks from the ſtorm, and ſteals to reſt.
So* ſhrinks the pining fold, and ſleeps
Beneath the valley's vaulted deeps;
Or crops the feſcue's dewy blade,
And treads unſeen the milky glade;
Forms by it's breath fair opening bowers,
Tranſparent domes, and pearly ſhowers.

Thus night rolls on till orient dawn
Unbars the purple gates of morn,
Unfolds each vale and ſnow-clad grove,
Mute founts and gloſſy banks above.

* *So ſhrinks the pining fold.*] It often happens that ſheep in this and in the Peak country, are immerſed many feet deep in ſnow for ſeveral days before they are diſcovered. The perpetual ſteam from their noſtrils keeps the ſnow, immediately over their heads, in a diſſolving ſtate, and hence a tunnel is conſtantly forming through the heaps above. This tunnel greatly facilitates their diſcovery, and ſupplies them with abundance of freſh air. The warmth of theſe animals ſoon diſſolves the ſurrounding ſnow, and at length the drift is ſo completely vaulted, that they are able to ſtretch their limbs, and ſearch for ſubſiſtence. It is aſſerted that ſheep have been frequently found alive after having been entombed in the ſnow during a fortnight.

Thin ſtreaky clouds, convex'd by ſtorms,
Slowly expand their tiſſued forms;
Long bars of grey and crimſon bright
Divert the golden threads of light;
Till glory's naſcent curve diſplays
One ſplendid orb, a world of rays!
Then lightens heaven's etherial bound,
And all the ſpangled country glows around.

Now that we have obſerved what power this author poſſeſſes to bring back to our recollection a ſtormy night in winter, ſucceeded by a ruddy dawn, blazing upon it's froſted landſcape, let us turn to his miſty morning, in the ſame ſeaſon, gradually clearing up into a mild and ſunny day.

——When Winter's icy hand
Whitens Britannia's ſhivering land,
Then flow the billowy vapors glide,
And roll their lazy oceans wide.
Oft have I mark'd from Mathfield's brow,
Her miſt-emboſom'd realms below,
While, here and there, a ſoaring tree
Waded amid the vapory ſea,
And Aſhbourn's ſpire to diſtant ſight
Tower'd, like a maſt, in dubious light.

If,

If, through the paly gloom, the ſun
With ſtruggling beams his journey won,
Soon as he rais'd his crimſon eye
With tranſport flaſh'd th' illumin'd ſky;
The vane, rekindling at his blaze,
Shot, like a meteor, through the haze;
The trees in liquid luſtre flow'd,
And all the dim tranſparence glow'd,
* .....
.....
.....
.....
The ruſtic, on his fields below,
Shoves from his lot the melting ſnow;
Salutes the welcome change, and ſeems
To taſte of life's diviner ſtreams;
Breathes with delight the temperate air,
And views, with half-clos'd eyes, the boundleſs glare.

What a pretty ſummer ſcene riſes in the following verſes from the ſame poem!

——— Wide ſpread
An elm uprears his reverend head;

* A Lapland ſcene, which ſucceeds to the laſt line, is omitted, not from its want of poetic beauty, but merely to ſhorten the quotation.

His front the whiſpering breeze receives,
The blue ſky trembles through it's leaves;
A cottage group beneath his ſhade,
Their locks with flowers and ruſhes braid;
And, gurgling round dark beds of ſedge,
A brook juſt ſhows it's ſilver edge.

But now, turning from The Vales of Weaver, let us ſeek the Botanic Garden. The commencement of that poem in 1779 has been previouſly mentioned, with the circumſtance which gave it birth. It conſiſts of two parts; the firſt contains the Economy of Vegetation, the ſecond the Loves of the Plants. Each is enriched by a number of philoſophical notes. They ſtate a great variety of theories and experiments in botany, chemiſtry, electricity, mechanics, and in the various ſpecies of air, ſalubrious, noxious, and deadly. The diſcoveries of the modern profeſſors in all thoſe ſciences, are frequently mentioned with praiſe highly gratifying to them. In

theſe notes explanations are found of every perſonified plant, it's generic hiſtory, it's local ſituation, and the nature of the ſoil and climate to which it is indigenous; it's botanic and its common name.

The verſe corrected, poliſhed, and modulated with the moſt ſedulous attention; the notes involving ſuch great diverſity of matter relating to natural hiſtory; and the compoſition going forward in the ſhort receſſes of profeſſional attendance, but chiefly in his chaiſe, as he travelled from one place to another, the Botanic Garden could not be the work of one, two, or three years; it was *ten* from its primal lines to its firſt publication. The immenſe price which the bookſeller gave for this work, was doubtleſs owing to conſiderations which inſpired his truſt in it's popularity. Botany was, at that time, and ſtill continues a very faſhionable ſtudy. Not only philoſophers, but fine ladies and gentlemen, ſought

to explore it's arcana. This poem, therefore, involved two claſſes of readers by whom it would probably be purchaſed. Every ſkilful Botaniſt, every mere Tyro in the ſcience, would wiſh to poſſeſs it for the ſake of the notes, though inſenſible, perhaps, as the verieſt ruſtic, to the charms of poetry; while every reader, awakened to them, muſt be ambitious to ſee ſuch a conſtellation of poetic ſtars in his library; all that gave immortality to Ovid's fame, without the ſlighteſt imitation of his manner, the leaſt debt to his ideas; ſince, though Dr. Darwin often retells that poet's ſtories, it is always with new imagery and heightened intereſt.

Certainly it was by an inverſion of all cuſtom that Dr. Darwin publiſhed the ſecond part of his poem firſt. The reaſon given for ſo extraordinary a manœuvre in that advertiſement which led the younger ſiſter before the elder on the field of pub-

lic

lic exhibition, is this, that the appearance of the first part had been deferred till another year, for the purpose of repeating some experiments in vegetation.

The Doctor was accustomed to remark, that whenever a strange step had been taken, if any way obnoxious to censure, the alleged reason was scarcely ever the real motive. His own singular management in this instance, and the way in which he accounted for it, proved a case in point. He was conscious that the second part of his work would be more level than the first to the comprehension, more congenial to the taste of the superficial reader, from it's being much less abstract and metaphysic, while it possessed more than sufficient poetic matter to entertain and charm the enlightened and judicious few. They, however, he well knew, when his first part should appear, would feel it's superiority to the earlier publication, it's grander conceptions, it's more

splendid

ſplendid imagery, though leſs calculated to amuſe and to be underſtood by common readers. Thoſe of that laſt number who had purchaſed the firſt part would not like to poſſeſs the poem incomplete, and therefore would purchaſe the ſecond. The obſervations of this paragraph refer to the poetry of the work, and to the two claſſes of readers who would value it chiefly on that account. The notes to each part muſt render them equally valuable to the votaries of botany, and other modern ſciences.

It is with juſt and delicate criticiſm that Mr. Fellowes again obſerves of Dr. Darwin's poetry: "In perſpicuity, which is "one of the firſt excellences in poetic as "well as proſe compoſition, this author "has perhaps few equals. He is clear, "even when deſcribing the moſt intricate "operations of nature, or the moſt com-"plex works of art; and there is a lucid "tranſ-

"transparency in his ſtyle through which "we ſee objects in their exact figure and "proportion; but Dr. Darwin's poetry "wants ſenſation; that ſort of excellence "which, while it enables us to ſee diſ-"tinctly the objects deſcribed, makes us "feel them acting on our nerves."

A little reflection is, perhaps, neceſſary preciſely to underſtand this criticiſm, diſtinguiſhing between vivid poetry which does *not* excite ſenſation, and vivid poetry which *does* excite it. Inſtances will beſt elucidate the diſtinction. See the two following deſcriptions of a wintery evening, late in autumn.

BOTANIC GARDEN.

Then o'er the cultur'd lawns and dreary waſte,
Retiring Autumn flings her howling blaſt,
Bends in tumultuous waves the ſtruggling woods,
And ſhowers her leafy honors on the floods,
In withering heaps collects the flowery ſpoil,
And each chill inſect ſleeps beneath the ſoil.

Quoted

Quoted from a ſonnet of Mr. C. Lloyd's published with Mr. Coleridge's poems.

Diſmal November! me it ſooths to view,
At parting day, the ſcanty foliage fall
From the wet fruit-tree, or the grey ſtone wall,
Whoſe cold films gliſten with unwholeſome dew;
To watch the ſweepy miſts from the dank earth
Enfold the neighbouring copſe, while, as they paſs,
The ſilent rain-drop bends the long, rank graſs,
Which wraps ſome bloſſom's immatured birth;
And, through my cot's lone lattice, glimmering grey,
Thy damp chill evenings have a charm for me,
Diſmal November!

The picture is equally juſt and ſtriking in both the above quotations; but the firſt, though more dignified, does *not* thrill our nerves, and the ſecond *does*. We admire in the former the power and grace of the poet; in the latter we forget the poet and his art, and only yearn to ſee images reflected in his mirror, which we have annually, and many times ſhuddered to ſurvey in real life.

When

When Dr. Darwin deſcribes the glow-worm, ſuppoſing it's light to be phoſphoric, he thus exhorts his allegoric perſonages, the nymphs of fire, meaning the electrical powers.

> Warm, on her moſſy couch, the radiant worm,
> Guard from cold dews her love-illumin'd form,
> From leaf to leaf conduct the virgin light,
> Star of the earth, and diamond of the night!

Nothing can be more poetic, more brilliant than this picture; yet, when Shakeſpear ſays,

> "The glow-worm ſhows the morning to be near,
> "And 'gins to pale his ineffectual fire,"

we feel ſenſation which the more reſplendent picture of this inſect had failed to inſpire, notwithſtanding the pleaſure it had given us, the admiration it had excited.

Probably the reaſon why Dr. Darwin's poetry,

poetry, while it delights the imagination, leaves the nerves at reſt, may be, that he ſeldom mixes with the pictureſque the (as it is termed in criticiſm) *moral epithet*, meaning that quality of the thing mentioned, which pertains more to the mind, or heart, than to the eye, and which, inſtead of picture, excites ſenſation. Shakeſpear gives no diſtinct picture of the glow-worm, ſince the only epithet he uſes for it is not deſcriptive of its appropriate luſtre, which has a tint ſpecified in the enſuing quotation.

" ——From the bloom that ſpreads
" Reſplendent in the lucid morn of May,
" To the green light the little glow-worm ſheds
" On moſſy banks, when midnight glooms prevail,
" And Silence broods o'er all the ſhelter'd dale."

If Dr. Darwin alſo omits to mention the particular hue of this inſect, when it is luminous, he conveys that hue to the imagi-

imagination when he ſays, " Star of the " earth," ſince the largeſt and brighteſt ſtars have the ſame maſter-tint. Oſſian ſays, " Night is dull and dark, no ſtar " with its green, trembling beams!"

But Shakeſpear's moral epithet, *ineffectual*, does better than paint it's object. It excites a ſort of tender pity for the little inſect, ſhining without either warmth or uſeful light, in the dark and lonely hours.

BOTANIC GARDEN.

And now the riſing moon, with luſtre pale,
O'er heaven's dark arch unfurls her milky veil.

This picture is charming: yet when Milton paints the ſame object thus,

" —— Now reigns,
" Full orb'd, the moon, and with more pleaſant light,
" Shadowy, ſets off the face of things,"

the charm is on the nerves, as well as on the

the eye. The moral epithet *pleasant*, excites ſenſation, while the picturesque epithet, *ſhadowy*, has all the truth, the grace, and power of the pencil. It is that charm on the *nerves* to which Mr. Fellowes ſo well applies the word, *ſenſation*. It ſeems a new term in criticiſm, and is uſeful to expreſs what pathos would expreſs too ſtrongly, and therefore with leſs accuracy. Pathos is the power of affecting the heart; by ſenſation is meant that of acting upon the nerves.

Beneath their torpor, the heart, or the paſſions, cannot be affected; but the nerves may be awakened to lively, or penſive pleaſure, by compoſition which, not exciting any poſitive paſſion, may not act upon the heart in a degree to juſtify the application of the word, *pathetic*; and for this gentler, ſubtler, and more evaneſcent influence, which almoſt imperceptibly touches the

paſſions

paſſions without agitating them, Mr. F.'s term is happy.

Dr. Darwin's excellence conſiſts in delighting the eye, the taſte, and the fancy, by the ſtrength, diſtinctneſs, elegance, and perfect originality of his pictures; and in delighting the ear by the rich cadence of his numbers; but the paſſions are generally aſleep, and ſeldom are the nerves thrilled by his imagery, impreſſive and beauteous as it is, or by his landſcapes, with all their vividneſs.

It may, however, be juſtly pleaded for his great work, that it's ingenious and novel plan did not involve any claim upon the affections. We are preſented with an highly imaginative and ſplendidly deſcriptive poem, whoſe ſucceſſive pictures alternately poſſeſs the ſublimity of Michael Angelo, the correctneſs and elegance of Raphael, with the glow of Titian; whoſe landſcapes have, at times, the ſtrength of

Salvator, and at others the ſoftneſs of Claude; whoſe numbers are of ſtately grace, and artful harmony; while its alluſions to ancient and modern hiſtory and fable, and its interſperſion of recent and extraordinary anecdotes, render it extremely entertaining. Adapting the paſt and recent diſcoveries in natural and ſcientific philoſophy to the purpoſes of heroic verſe, the Botanic Garden forms a new claſs in poetry, and by ſo doing, gives to the Britiſh Parnaſſus a wider extent than it poſſeſſed in Greece, or in ancient, or modern Rome.

Nor is it only that this compoſition takes unbeaten ground, and forms an additional order in the fanes of the Muſes, it forms that new order ſo brilliantly, that though it may have many imitators, it will probably never have an equal in it's particular claſs; neither would it's ſtyle apply happily to ſubjects leſs intrinſically picturesque. The

ſpecies

ſpecies of praiſe here given to this work is all that it's author deſired to excite. We have no right to complain of any writer, or to cenſure him for not poſſeſſing thoſe powers at which he did not aim, and which are not neceſſarily connected with his plan.

To the ſubject Dr. Darwin choſe, his talents were eminently calculated. Neither Pope nor Gray would have executed it ſo well; nor would Darwin have written ſo fine an Eſſay on Man, ſo intereſting a Churchyard, or ſo lovely an Ode on the proſpect of the ſchool at which he was educated, had that ſchool been Eaton. He would not have ſucceeded ſo tranſcendently on themes, which demanded either pathos, or that ſort of tender and delicate feeling in the poet, which excites in the reader ſympathetic ſenſation; or yet in the ſacred morality of ethic poetry, which however it may admit, or require that

fancy adorn it with ſome rare, and lovely flowers, "allows to ornament but a ſecond "place, and always renders it ſubordinate "to intrinſic worth and juſt deſign." To whomſoever he might have been practically inferior on themes he has left unattempted, he is ſurely not inferior to Ovid; and if poetic taſte is not much degenerated, or ſhall not hereafter degenerate, the Botanic Garden will live as long as the Metamorphoſes.

That in his poetic ſtyle Dr. Darwin is a manneriſt cannot be denied; but ſo was Milton, in the Paradiſe Loſt; ſo was Young, in the Night Thoughts; ſo was Akenſide, in the Pleaſures of Imagination. The Darwinian peculiarity is in part formed by the very frequent uſe of the imperative mood, generally beginning the couplet either with that, or with the verb active, or the noun perſonal. Hence, the accent lies oftener on the firſt ſyllable of each couplet in his

verſe than in that of any other rhymiſt; and it is, in conſequence, peculiarly ſpirited and energetic. Dr. Darwin's ſtyle is alſo diſtinguiſhed by the liberal uſe of the ſpondee, viz. * two monoſyllables, equally accented, following each other inſtantly in ſome part of the line.

Spondees, judiciouſly uſed, vary and increaſe the general harmony in every ſpecies of verſe, whether blank or rhyme. They preſerve the numbers from too luſcious ſweetneſs, from cloying ſameneſs, from feeble elegance, and *that*, by contraſting the ſmoothneſs of the dactyls, and the rich melodies of the iambic accents. So diſcords reſolving into concords, inſpirit the ſtrains of muſical compoſition. But it is poſſible to make too frequent uſe of the ſpondee in poetry, as of the diſcord in muſic. Dr. Darwin's ear preſerved him

* This explanation is for the ladies.

from that exuberance; but Mr. Bowles, one of the fineſt poets of this day, often renders his verſification, which is, at times, moſt exquiſitely ſweet, harſh, by the too frequently-recurring ſpondee.

From that gentleman's verſe a couple of inſtances may be ſelected, to ſhow, in one, that harmony may be improved by a ſparing uſe of that accent, and injured in the other, by uſing it too freely.

MR. BOWLES' HOPE.

But luſty Enterpriſe, with looks of glee,
Approach'd the drooping youth, as he would ſay,
Come to the *wild woods* and the hills with me,
And throw thy ſullen myrtle wreath away!

BOWLES' ELEGIAC STANZAS.

Haſt thou * not viſited that pleaſant place,
Where in this *hard world* I have happieſt been,
And ſhall I tremble at thy lifted mace,
That hath *pierc'd all* on which *life ſeem'd* to lean?

* Death.

The

The recurrence of two equally accented words three times in the ſtanza, and twice in the laſt line, incumbers the verſification, while the ſingle uſe of the ſpondee in the preceding four lines, from Hope, gives it grace and beauty. Dr. Darwin, in the following paſſage, has uſed it frequently, without producing any ſuch dead weight upon the verſe. The quotation is from the charge of the Botanic Queen to the Nymphs of Fire, a poetic allegory for the influence of the fluid matter of heat in forwarding the germination and growth of plants.

Pervade, pellucid forms, their cold retreat!
Ray, from *bright orbs*, your viewleſs floods of heat!
From earth's *deep waſtes* electric torrents pour,
Or ſhed from heav'n the ſcintillating ſhower!
Pierce the *dull root*, relax its fibre trains,
Thaw the *thick blood* that lingers in its veins!
Melt with *warm breath*, the fragrant gums that bind
Th' expanding foliage in its ſcaly rind!

And as in air the laughing leaflets play,
And turn their ſhining boſoms to the ray,
Nymphs, with *ſweet ſmile*, each opening flower invite,
And on its damaſk eyelids pour the light!

On reflection, it ſhould ſeem that it is the ſituation of theſe twin accents in the line, which prevents their frequent recurrence from producing harſhneſs. It will be obſerved in the laſt quotation, that all the many ſpondees are preceded by two ſyllables; and that it is only when they are preceded by an odd ſyllable, either one or three, that they increaſe the harmony by their ſparing, and injure it by their frequent appearance. One ſyllable only goes before the ſpondee in this line from the Botanic Garden.

The *wan ſtars* glimmering through the ſilver train.

Three ſyllables in this verſe from the ſame poem.

Where now the *South-ſea* heaves its waſte of froſt.

Again,

Again,

Loud ſhrieks the *lone thruſh* from his leafleſs thorn.

And, in that laſt inſtance, the ſpondee recurring twice in one line, harſhneſs is the reſult. Once uſed only, and the harſhneſs had been avoided; thus,

And ſhrieks the *lone thruſh* from the leafleſs thorn.

The following is a couplet where the ſpondee ſucceeding to three monoſyllables has an exquiſite effect of ſound echoing ſenſe.

BOTANIC GARDEN.

With paler luſtre where Aquarius burns,
And ſhowers the *ſtill ſnow* from his hoary urns.

We find another ſtriking peculiarity in Dr. Darwin's ſtyle, that of invariably preſenting

ſenting a claſs by an imperſonified individual; thus,

> Where, nurs'd in night, incumbent Tempeſt ſhrouds
> The ſeeds of thunder in circumfluent clouds.

Again,

> Where, with chill frown, enormous Alps alarms
> A thouſand realms horizon'd in his arms.

Again,

> Sailing in air, when dark Monſoon enſhrouds
> His trophic mountains in a night of clouds.

Similar inſtances crowd the pages of the Botanic Garden. There is extreme ſublimity in the whole of that paſſage, which converts the monſoon winds into an individual monſter,

> That ſhowers on Afric all his thouſand urns.

Dr. Johnſon, Mr. Burke, and Dr. Parr, have the ſame habit in their proſe; "Criticiſm pronounces," inſtead of "Critics pronounce."

" pronounce." " Malignance will not " allow," inſtead of " Malignant people " will not allow." " Good-nature refuſes " to liſten," inſtead of " a good natured " man refuſes to liſten," and ſo on.

This manner of writing, whether in verſe or proſe, ſweeps from the poliſhed marble of poetry and eloquence, a number of the ſticks and ſtraws of our language; its articles, conjunctives, and prepoſitions. Addiſon's ſerious Eſſays are ſo littered with them and with idioms, as to render it ſtrange that they ſhould ſtill be conſidered as patterns of didactic oratory. No man of genius, however, adopts their diffuſe and feeble ſtyle, now that the ſtrength, the grace, and harmony of proſe-writing, on the dignified examples of our *later* eſſayiſts, ſenators, and pleaders, give us better examples. Theſe obſervations relate ſolely to the grave compoſitions of the celebrated Atticus. The quiet, eaſy, elegant

CHAPTER V.

ANALYSIS of the firſt part of the Botanic Garden.

THE ECONOMY OF VEGETATION.

After that landſcape of the ſcene which forms the exordium, the Goddeſs of Botany deſcends in gorgeous gaiety.

She comes!—the Goddeſs!—thro' the whiſpering air,
Bright as the morn, deſcends her bluſhing car;
Each circling wheel a wreath of flowers entwines;
And gemm'd with flowers the ſilken harneſs ſhines;
The golden bits with flowery ſtuds are deck'd,
And knots of flowers the crimſon reins connect.
And now on earth the ſilver axle rings,
And the ſhell ſinks upon it's ſlender ſprings;
Light from her airy ſeat the Goddeſs bounds,
And ſteps celeſtial preſs the panſied grounds.

Spring

Spring welcomes her with fragrance and with ſong, and, to receive her commiſſions, the four Elements attend. They are allegoriſed as Gnomes, Water-Nymphs, Sylphs, and Nymphs of Fire. Her addreſs to each claſs, and the buſineſs ſhe allots to them, form the four Cantos of this firſt part of the poem.

The Ladies of Ignition receive her primal attention. The picture with which her addreſs commences, is of conſummate brilliance and grace; behold it, reader, and judge if this praiſe be too glowing!

> Nymphs of primeval fire, your veſtal train
> Hung with gold treſſes o'er the vaſt inane;
> Pierc'd with your ſilver ſhafts the throne of night,
> And charm'd young Nature's opening eyes with light,
> When Love Divine, with brooding wings unfurl'd,
> Call'd from the rude abyſs the living world.

The Darwinian creation, which enſues, charms us infinitely, even while we recol-

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left its ſimpler greatneſs on the page of Moſes, and on its ſublime paraphraſe in the Paradiſe Loſt. The creation in this poem is aſtronomic, and involves the univerſe; and as ſuch is of excellence yet unequalled in its kind, and never to be excelled in the grandeur of its conceptions.

Let there be light, proclaim'd th' Almighty Lord,
Aſtoniſh'd Chaos heard the potent word;
Through all his realms the kindling ether runs,
And the maſs ſtarts into a million ſuns.
Earths round each ſun, with quick explofion, burſt,
And ſecond planets iſſue from the firſt;
Bend, as they journey, with projectile force,
In bright ellipſis, their reluctant courſe;
Orbs wheel in orbs, round centres centres roll,
And form, ſelf-balanc'd, one revolving whole;
Onward they move, amid their bright abode,
Space without bound, the boſom of their God.

The word of the Creator, by an alluſion to the effects of a ſpark upon gunpowder, ſetting into inſtant and univerſal blaze the ignited particles in Chaos, till they burſt into count-

leſs ſuns, is an idea ſublime in the firſt degree.

The ſubſequent comments of the Goddeſs on the powers of the nymphs of fire, introduce lovely pictures of the lightning and the rainbow; the exterior ſky, the twilight, the meteor, and the aurora-borealis; of the planets, the comet, and all the etherial blazes of the univerſe.

She next exhibits them as ſuperintending the ſubterranean and external volcanos.

> You, from deep cauldrons and unmeaſur'd caves,
> Blow flaming airs, or pour vitreſcent waves;
> O'er ſhining oceans ray volcanic light,
> Or hurl innocuous embers through the night.

She compares them to Venus and her Nymphs, after they had deſcended to the cave of Vulcan. The claſſic fable forms a varied and lively little drama. The Goddeſs proceeds to remind her hand-maids of their employments; ſays, they lead their glittering

glittering bands around the ſinking day, and when the ſun retreats, confine, with folds of air, his lingering fires to the cold boſom of earth.

O'er eve's pale forms diffuſe phoſphoric light,
And deck with lambent flames the ſhrine of night.

Surely there cannot be a more beautiful deſcription of a vernal twilight. The phoſphoreſcent quality of the Bolognian ſtone, Beccari's priſmatic ſhells, and the harp of Memnon, which is recorded to have breathed ſpontaneous chords when ſhone upon by the riſing ſun, are all compared to the twilight glimmerings of the horizon; ſo alſo the luminous inſects, the glow-worm, the fire-flies of the tropics, the fabulous ignis fatuus, and the gymnotus electricus, brought to England from Surinam in South America, about the year 1783; a fiſh, whoſe electric power is, on provocation, mortal to his enemy. He is com-

pared to the Olympic eagle, that bears the lightning in it's talons.

Dr. Darwin conſiders the diſcovery of the uſes of fire, as the earlieſt and moſt important of the artificial comforts. Hence, the Goddeſs praiſes her nymphs of that element, as the primal inſtructers of ſavage man. Its dangerous excellence is illuſtrated by the ſevere beauty of the ſerpent-haired Meduſa, as it blazes on the ſhield of Minerva.

They are next addreſſed as the patroneſſes of chemiſtry; teaching the uſes of gunpowder, and inſpiring Captain Savery with the invention of the ſteam-engine. The unpoetical name renders this introduction of a real perſon amidſt allegoric beings, unhappy; eſpecially ſince no dramatic circumſtance in his deſtiny recompenſes the infelicity. A deſcription of that eminently-uſeful machine is given with the

the accuracy of a mechanic philoſopher, and the dignity of a great poet. A prophecy follows, that it's powers will, in future times, be applied to the purpoſes of facilitating land and water carriage, and in navigating balloons.

The wonderful effects of this vaſt machine are ſuppoſed to reſemble the exploits of Hercules, and ſeveral of thoſe exploits are very finely pictured.

All the operations of electricity next paſs in review; a lovely female receiving the ſhock on a waxen elevation; alſo a circle of young men and women electrified. Their reſulting ſenſations are deſcribed with perfect truth and elegance, and the effects of this diſcovery in paralytic caſes are thus exquiſitely mentioned.

> Palſy's cold hands the fierce concuſſion own,
> And Life clings trembling on her tottering throne.

Such powers in this artful lightning are compared to thoſe of the natural; its deleterious exceſs, to the fire of heaven that ſcathes the oak; its milder degree, to the fairy rings, which the poet believes to have been imprinted by the flaſhes of the thunder ſtorm darting on the graſs and circularly blighting it.

The diſaſtrous fate of profeſſor Richman, at Peterſburgh, purſuing electric experiment with fatal temerity, riſes to the eye, and makes the reader a ſhuddering ſpectator of its progreſs and reſult.

Dr. Franklin, with his preſerving rods, is compared to the celebrated Florentine gem, Cupid ſnatching the lightnings from Jupiter, which the poet conſiders as a noble allegory, repreſenting Divine Juſtice diſarmed by Divine Love. The poetic ſcene, from the Gem, is one of the ſweeteſt little dramas of this poem; ſo ſweet, there

is

is no reſiſting the temptation of here exhibiting it to thoſe to whom the work itſelf may not inſtantly be acceſſible.

Thus when, on wanton wing, intrepid Love
Snatch'd the rais'd lightning from the arm of Jove,
Quick o'er his knee the triple bolt he bent,
The cluſter'd darts and forky arrows rent;
Snapp'd, with illumin'd hands, each flaming ſhaft,
His tingling fingers ſhook, and ſtamp'd, and laugh'd.
Bright o'er the floor the ſcatter'd fragments blaz'd,
And Gods, retreating, trembled as they gaz'd.
Th' immortal Sire, indulgent to his child,
Bow'd his ambroſial locks, and Heav'n relenting, ſmil'd.

Of the great ſuperiority of poetic to actual picture, this paſſage is one of the countleſs proofs, perceived by every reader who has power to meet the ideas of the Bard. Suppoſe the ſubject of this little fable to be engraven, or painted with the utmoſt excellence, yet the exquiſitely natural action of the infant god ſhaking his fingers, and laughing and ſtamping, from that degree of pain experienced on ſlightly

touching an ignited ſubſtance; the ſcattering over the floor the broken darts and arrows of the lightning; the alarmed deities retreating, and the indulgent nod and increaſing ſmile of Jupiter, are all progreſſive circumſtances which genius may paint on the imagination, but not on the canvaſs.

The Goddeſs next adverts to the influence of her nymphs on animal circulation, from the theory of the phoſphoric acid colouring and warming the blood, and hence becoming an indiſpenſable ingredient in vital formation

From the crown'd forehead to the proſtrate weed.

This theory is illuſtrated by the noble fable of Eros, or Divine Love, iſſuing from the great egg of night, floating in chaos; but ſurely the image of this celeſtial love is too gay for the ſublimity of its birth; "gaudy wings, ſoft ſmiles, golden curls,

"and

" and ſilver darts," might ſuit the cyprian but not the hieroglyphic Cupid.

——— Higher far of *him*,
And with myſterious reverence we deem.

MILTON.

Her Nymphs thus eulogized,

The Goddeſs paus'd, admir'd, with conſcious pride,
Th' effulgent legions marſhall'd by her ſide,
Forms ſpher'd in fire, with trembling light array'd,
Ens without weight, and ſubſtance without ſhade.

It may be obſerved of the two laſt lines that the imagination, which could with ſuch appropriate and novel beauty inveſt its ideal perſonages, cannot be too highly appreciated, and we might as well diſdain the ſun for often dazzling us with exceſs of ſplendor, as to ſuffer the occaſional redundance of ornament in this extraordinary work, to make us cold and inſenſible to it's original, bold, and, in their claſs, peerleſs excellences.

The uſe of words entirely Latin has been objected to this poem, as *ens* for *life*, in the laſt verſe of the above quotation. Niceneſs of ear probably induced its ſubſtitution, and that from the proximity of the word *light* in the preceding line, which would have been of too ſimilar ſound to *life*, had life been uſed inſtead of it's Latin ſynoniſm, *ens*.

The Botanic Queen now proceeds to appoint the nymphs of fire their taſks. She bids them awaken the weſt wind, chafe his wan cheeks, and wring the rain-drops from his hair; bids them blaze around the froſted rills, and ſtagnant waters, and charm the Naiad from her ſilent cave, where ſhe ſits enſhrined in ice, claſping her empty urns. She is compared to Niobe.

Our Poet ſeems to have forgotten himſelf in thus throwing the year back into the ſkirts of winter; ſince, in opening this Canto,

Canto, he had deſcribed the ſpring in all her glory, when the Botanic Queen deſcended, and the imperſonized elements received her.

The nymphs are alſo commanded to aſſail the fiend of froſt; to break his white towers and cryſtal mail; to drive him to Zembla, and chain him to the northern bear. A ſimile enſues, in which the grampus, and the ſcene of the whale fiſhery, in all the ſtrength of poetic colouring, meets the attention of the reader.

Suppoſed influence of the principle of internal heat in vegetation induces a command to theſe its agents to pour electric torrents from the deep waſtes of earth, which may pierce the root, relax the fibres, and thaw the ſap of plants, flowers, and trees. The aſſerted conſequence of their obedience to this command produces a noble ſketch of the umbrageous wilds of Canada.

Canada. Their operations are oddly compared to the effects of the ſympathetic inks, and of a picture drawn in them; and a receipt to make them is given in a note.

The nymphs are now exhorted to quit the ſummer-regions when the dog-ſtar ſhall preſide in them. It's often blighting influence on the fruits of the earth is illuſtrated by an alluſion to the fate of Semele. Then riſes an iceland ſcene, and an aſtronomic perſonification. Look at it, courteous reader, and if with eyes of *indifference*, arraign the power of prejudice in thy mind, or ſuſpect thy want of taſte for the higher orders of poetry.

> There, in her azure coif, and ſtarry ſtole,
> Grey Twilight ſits, and rules the ſlumbering Pole;
> Bends the pale moon-beam round the ſparkling coaſt,
> And ſtrews with livid hands eternal froſt.

An agency of the ignited particles in creation, that of ſeparating the ice-iſlands, fancifully induces a command from the Goddeſs,

Goddeſs, that her nymphs ſhould float their broken maſſes of ice to the torrid climates. It is adorned with the ſcripture incident, Elijah, on mount Carmel, invoking fire from heaven, and the incident is given with all the Darwinian power.

This Canto terminates with the obedience of the nymphs, and a ſimile for their departure. They ſtart from the ſoil, and wing their duteous flight,

> While vaulted ſkies, with ſtreams of tranſient rays,
> Shine as they paſs, and earth and ocean blaze.

A comparative deſcription of the fire-works exhibited in great cities for the return of peace and liberty, after the cruel oppreſſions of war, is of the moſt accurate preciſion; but it is faulty as a ſimile, from it's extreme inferiority to the imaginary objects which it is meant to illuſtrate. The nymphs of fire, flying on their appointed errands, in every direction, illuminating, with

with evaneſcent flaſhes, the whole horizon, the ſea, and the land, is ſo grand an idea, that the wheels, the dragons, the ſerpents, the mock ſtars, and ſuns, of that ever childiſh exhibition, become ludicrous, as ſucceeding to a picture of ſuch gay ſublimity; for ſublimity is not *always* confined to ſombre objects. Proofs that it is not, are found in the Paradiſe Loſt. When Adam obſerves to Eve, on the approach of the angel Michael, that the glorious ſhape ſeems another morning riſen on mid-noon, the idea is no leſs ſublime than it is gay.

This apprehended injudiciouſneſs of the fire-work ſimile ſuggeſts the remark, that a few ſuch erratic luxuriances of a pictureſque fancy, together with the peculiar conſtruction of the Darwinian verſe, and it's laviſh perſonification, enabled an highly ingenious ſatiriſt to burleſque the Loves of the Plants, by the Loves of the Triangles. Eminently fortunate for it's purpoſe was the

the thought of transforming cubes, and cones, and cylinders, and other technical terms of mathematic and mechanic ſcience, into nymphs and ſwains, enamoured of each other. The verſe of this ironical poem is not only Darwinian, but it is beautifully Darwinian. The very ſlightly alluſive power of ſeveral of the ſimilies in the Botanic Garden, is ridiculed with infinite ſubtleneſs and wit; while the little ſtories in this burleſque, ſo comic in their ſcantineſs of reſemblance, are very elegantly told. That brilliant ſatire amply refutes Lord Shafteſbury's ſyſtem, that ridicule is the teſt of truth, and that it is impoſſible to ridicule with effect what is intrinſically excellent. The warmeſt admirers of Dr. Darwin's ſplendid poem, and of the ingenious theories and ſtated experiments of the notes, muſt yet be amuſed with ſuch groteſque imitation of each; juſt as they

are

are diverted with the burleſque, in the Critic, of the death of Hotſpur, and of Eve's beautiful proteſt to Adam,

Sweet is the breath of morn, &c.

On the ſubject of this ſatire, Dr. Darwin wanted preſence of mind. Inſtead of pretending, as he did, never to have ſeen or heard of the Loves of the Triangles, when queſtioned on the ſubject, he ſhould voluntarily have mentioned that ſatire every where, and praiſed it's wit and ingenuity. He ought to have triumphed in a juſt conſciouſneſs, that his poem could loſe none of it's charms with the few, whoſe praiſe is fame, by the artful reſemblance of this falſe Florimel; ſecure that it's mock graces, brilliant as they are, would ſoon melt away, like the Nymph of Snow in the Fairie Queen, while the genuine charms of his muſe muſt endure ſo long as the Engliſh language

language ſhall exiſt; nay, ſhould that periſh, Tranſlation would preſerve the Botanic Garden as one of its gems; if not in original brightneſs, would at leaſt retain all that hoſt of beauties which do not depend upon the perhaps intransfuſable felicities of verbal expreſſion. The laviſh magnificence of the imagery in this work, Genius alone, bold, original, creative, and fertile in the extreme, could have produced. It's profuſion may cloy the faſtidious, it's ſplendor may dazzle the poetically weak of ſight; but ſtill it is the reſult of that power, which Shakeſpear characteriſes when he ſays,

The Poet's eye, in a fine phrenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
And as Imagination bodies forth
The form of things unknown, the Poet's pen
Turns them to ſhape, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation, and a name.

SECOND CANTO

Opens with the charge of the Botanic Queen to her Gnomes, who are here reſtored to that benevolent character allotted to them by Roſicruſius, and which, to ſuit his purpoſe, Pope rendered malignant, in the Rape of the Lock. She addreſſes them as miniſtrant ſpirits to ſubterranean vegetation, and ſpectators of all the aſtronomic and terraqueous wonders of creation; of the Sun exploding our planet, the Earth, from his crater.

Except to introduce an extremely fine deſcription of the ſun's ſigns in the zodiac, it would be difficult to gueſs why the Gnomes ſhould be ſuppoſed to have purſued the flying ſphere, and encircled the year's ſtarry girdle. Thoſe ſhould ſeem employments better ſuited to the allotted nature of the Nymphs of Ignition, or at leaſt of the Sylphs, than of theſe their ſubter-

ſubterranean ſiſters. The epithet *ardent*, "your ardent troops," is a ſeldom-found inſtance of inaccuracy in this poem, corrected and poliſhed with ſuch elaborate care; eager, active, any thing rather than an adjective metaphorically taken from fire, the aſſigned element of the nymphs recently diſmiſſed.

Next riſes the golden age, and Earth is inveſted with Edenic privileges and exemptions. We are told, in a note, that there is an ancient gem, repreſenting Venus riſing out of the ſea, ſupported by two Tritons; that the allegory was originally an hieroglyphic picture, before letters were invented, deſcriptive of the formation of the earth from the ocean. The poet takes this opportunity of preſenting to his readers the moſt beautiful portrait of Venus, firſt emerging from her parent deep, that has been given by any Bard, ancient or modern; and it's features are unborrowed as they

are peerleſs. She has about her the traces of the humid element, from which ſhe riſes, and they increaſe her general lovelineſs and grace; wringing, with roſy fingers, her golden treſſes, as they hang uncurled around her fair brows, while bright drops of water roll from her lifted arms, wander round her neck, ſtand in pearls upon her poliſhed ſhoulders and back, and ſtar with glittering brine her whole lucid form. Thus the Darwinian Venus,

> O'er the ſmooth ſurge, on ſilver ſandals ſtood,
> And look'd enchantment on the dazzled flood.

The firſt terreſtrial volcano is next deſcribed; an earthquake of incalculable magnitude, producing continents and iſlands on the before united and level earth, with ſeparating oceans rolling between them. The birth of the Moon is now repreſented as thrown from the Earth near

the

the ſouth-pole, in conſequence of this primal convulſion, by the exploſion of water, or other vapors of greater power. The lunar birth is thus beautifully preſented to the eye,

When roſe the continents, and ſunk the main,
And Earth's huge ſphere, exploding, burſt in twain,
Gnomes, how you gaz'd, when from her wounded ſide,
Where now the South-ſea rolls its waſte of tide,
Roſe, on ſwift wheels, the Moon's refulgent car,
Circling the ſolar orb, a ſiſter ſtar;
Dimpled with vales, with ſhining hills emboſs'd,
And roll'd round Earth her airleſs realms of froſt.

The difficulty of introducing theſe charming images any other way than by reminding the Gnomes of what they are ſuppoſed to have ſeen, gives us, in this addreſs, the noun perſonal in apoſtrophe, with a frequency which, far from being graceful, becomes almoſt ludicrous; as, "Gnomes, "how you gaz'd! &c." — "Gnomes, "how you ſhriek'd!" — "Gnomes

" how you trembled!"—but infinite is the poetic fancy with which the hypotheſis is maintained, of the earth being ſtruck from the crater of the ſun, and the moon from the firſt terreſtrial volcano.

The Goddeſs now reminds her ſubterranean hand-maids of their aſſiſtance in having formed into marble and other petrific ſubſtances, the diſſolving ſhells which covered the prominent parts of the earth, thrown up from her ocean in that firſt convulſion, by ſub-marine fires. Sculpture is here introduced, and poetic caſts of the famous ancient ſtatues, the Hercules, Antinous, Apollo, and Venus, riſe from the page. Roubilliac, unqueſtionably the firſt ſtatuary of the modern world, is praiſed with enthuſiaſm; and Mrs. Damer, the ingenious miſtreſs of the chiſel, with delight.

To the Gnomes is next imputed the power of extracting the ſaline particles from

from different kinds of earths; from proſtrate woods, and from moraſſes; and this introduces the deſcription of a town in the immenſe ſalt-mines of Poland. With his peculiar ingenuity, this Bard of Fancy ſhows us the ſaline city; and that, and the ſtatue ſuppoſed to be Lot's wife, the river and temple, gleam and ſparkle on the imagination of every reader who *has* imagination. To thoſe who have it *not*, the magnificent pageantries of this poem will paſs unreflected, unimpreſſive,

> And, like the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion,
> Leave not a wreck behind.

Perſonification is ſurely carried too far when, in the next paſſage, azotic gas is made the love of the virgin air, and fire transformed into a jealous rival, indignant of the treacherous courtſhip. The trio are compared to Mars, Venus, and Vulcan, and the Homeric tale, of the enmeſhed

pair, is told again. The mechaniſm of the net; the ſtruggles of the guilty goddeſs to eſcape; her impatient exhortations to her nymphs, to diſunite the links of the iron net-work; her efforts to conceal her beauties from the ſurrounding deities, have all that truth to nature with which criticiſm has juſtly obſerved, Shakeſpear draws the manners of his imaginary beings. With much more of that appropriate verity has Darwin told this ſtory than Homer, and not more voluptuouſly. This is the only paſſage in the Botanic Garden which can juſtly be taxed with voluptuouſneſs, and with Homer its author ſhares the cenſure. Homer, whoſe morality has been ſo loudly, but ſo partially applauded, ſince his deities are all either libertine or unjuſt; and of his heroes, only one is in himſelf a virtuous man, and he defends the cauſe of his guilty brother, and does not once urge the reſtoration of the ſtolen wife to her injured

jured huſband, an atonement not only in itſelf due, but which muſt have raiſed the ſiege, ſaved the city, and ſpared immenſe effuſion of human blood. The ſtory, if really founded on hiſtoric circumſtances, might not have authoriſed the reſtoration of Helen, but it was in the poet's power to have made Hector *urge* it.

If the Homeric fable of Mars and Venus, in Vulcan's net, repeated by Darwin with new circumſtances, more pictureſque, not more indelicate, forms *one* ſomewhat licentious paſſage in the Botanic Garden, the Iliad contains ſeveral which are equally voluptuous, even after Pope has chaſtened them. As to the amours of the Plants and Flowers, it is a burleſque upon morality to make them reſponſible at its tribunal. The floral harems do not form an imaginary but a real ſyſtem, which philoſophy has diſcovered, and with which poetry ſports. The impurity is in the imagination

of

of the reader, not on the pages of the poet, when the Botanic Garden is conſidered on the whole, as an immodeſt compoſition.

From the net of Vulcan, and the lovers it entangles, the Poet leads us to his forge, after the mention of iron, as produced by the decompoſition of vegetable bodies. To perceive the ſtrength and truth of the Forge-picture, no power of imagination, on the part of the reader, is neceſſary; memory is ſufficient. Who has not ſeen a blackſmith's ſhop, and heard its din? Here it blazes and reſounds on the page. The formation of magnetic bars enſues. Though the power of the magnet has been known and applied to uſe from very early times, yet the Poet imputes theſe artificial magnets to their laſt improver, the perſonal friend of his youth, Mr. Michell, mentioned early in theſe memoirs. Of Mr. Michell's proceſs in this improvement Dr. Darwin has formed another poetic

deſcription,

deſcription, ſo diſtinct that the operation may be performed from peruſing it attentively.

And now we meet an animated apoſtrophe to Steel, praiſing its uſe in navigation, agriculture, and war. This applauſive addreſs is one of the grandeſt in the poem, where ſo *many* are grand. What has poetry more noble than theſe firſt ſix lines of that eulogium?

Hail adamantine Steel! magnetic Lord,
King of the prow, the ploughſhare, and the ſword!
True to the pole, by thee the pilot guides
His ſteady courſe amid the ſtruggling tides!
Braves, with broad ſail, th' immeaſurable ſea,
Cleaves the dark air, and aſks no ſtar but thee!

A deſcription of Gems ſucceeds to that apoſtrophe, as a work of the Gnomes, by whom, from marine acids mixed with the ſhells of marine animals, and of calcareous, and argillaceous earths, they are here ſuppoſed

poſed to be, from time to time, produced. Theſe natural transformations are comparatively illuſtrated by thoſe of Ovidian fable; and Proteus-gallantries are retold even more beautifully than Ovid has told them, particularly the ſtory of Europa. It is here, beyond all poſſible tranſcendence, exquiſite, and it cloſes with a ſpirited compliment to the natives of Europe.

Returning to the ſubject, the Goddeſs reminds her Gnomes of having ſeen the ſubterranean volcanos forming the various ſpecies of clay; from the porcelain of China, and of ancient Etruria, to thoſe uſed in the beautiful productions of its modern nameſake, brought to ſo much perfection by the late Mr. Wedgewood. The mechaniſm of the porcelain of China, with its ungraceful forms and gaudy ornaments, riſes on the page. The ſuperiority, in the two laſt circumſtances, of our Engliſh Etruria, is aſſerted, as producing "un-

"copied

"copied beauty and ideal grace;" and its mechaniſm is alſo given, but in terms ſo technical as to ſpoil the harmony of the verſe in that paſſage. Satire has caught hold of the ſeldom harſhneſs, triumphantly diſplaying it in the Loves of the Triangles.

Mr. Wedgewood is addreſſed as at once the friend of Art and Virtue. His medallion of the Negro-ſlave in chains, imploring mercy, is mentioned as reproaching our great national ſin againſt juſtice and mercy, ſo long reſiſting the admonitions of Benevolence and Piety, in the ſenate; alſo another medallion of Hope, attended by Peace, and Art, and Labour. "It was made of clay from Botany Bay, "and many of them were ſent thither, to "ſhow the inhabitants what their materials "would do, and to encourage their in-"duſtry." The emblematic figures on the Portland Vaſe, ſo finely imitated in our new Etruria, next appear in all the charms

of

of poetry, while the truth of their ingenious conſtruction is ſupported in the notes with wonderful learning and preciſion, ſo as to leave no doubt on the unprejudiced mind, that the Bard of Linneus has explained their real deſign. This addreſs to Mr. Wedgewood cloſes with the aſſerted immortality of his productions.

Coal, Jet, and Amber, are next imperſonized, an individual for the ſpecies. The latter is placed on his "electric throne," as a material, the natural properties of which were the ſource of the diſcoveries in electricity, and from which the name of that branch of modern ſcience is derived, *electron* being the Greek word for *amber*. Led by its phoſphoric light, Dr. Franklin comes forward in the act of diſarming the lightning of its dire effects, by his electrical rods. His influence in procuring the freedom of America is applauded with much poetic imagery. The ſhort-lived freedom

of

of Ireland, in her acquirement of ſelf-legiſlation, is allegorized by "the warrior Li-"berty, helming his courſe to her ſhores."

Another bold figure of Liberty ſucceeds, preſented as a giant form, ſlumbering within the iron cage and marble walls of the French Baſtile, unconſcious of his chains, till, touched by the patriot flame, he rends his flimſy bonds, lifts his coloſſal form, and rears his hundred arms over his foes; calls to the good and brave of every country, with voice that echoes like the thunder of heaven, to the polar extremities;

> Gives to the winds his banner broad unfurl'd,
> And gathers in its ſhade the living world!

This ſublime ſally of a too-confiding imagination has made the poet and his work countleſs foes. They triumph over him on a reſult ſo contrary; on the mortal wounds given by French crimes to real liberty. They forget, or chooſe to forget,

that

that this part of the poem (though published after the other) appeared in 1791, antecedent to the dire regicide, and to all those unprecedented scenes of sanguinary cruelty inflicted on France by three of her republican tyrants, compared to whom the most remorseless of her monarchs was mild and merciful.

The Botanic Queen now reminds her Gnomes of the means they had used to produce metallic substances; and, from the mention of silver and gold, she starts into a spirited and noble exclamation over the cruelties committed by catholic superstition, in the East and West Indies; and from them she turns, with equal indignation, to the Slave Trade, that plague-spot on the reputation of our national humanity! that crying sin in the practice of our national religion! Greatly is it to the honor of our English poets, within the last twenty years, that, with very few exceptions, the

beſt and moſt highly-giſted of them have ſought their way to fame beneath the banners of Freedom and Mercy, whoſe eternal nature no national or individual abuſe, no hypocritical aſſumption, can change.

Theſe inſtances of unchriſtian barbarity lead to the ſtory of the cruel and impious Cambyſes on his march to ſubdue Ethiopia, after having deſtroyed the temples and devaſted the country of Thebes, and maſſacred its inhabitants. The fate of that army is deſcribed which he ſent to plunder the temple of Jupiter, and which periſhed in the deſert overwhelmed by ſand. The Gnomes are conſidered as miniſters of that juſt vengeance, and of the famine by which it was preceded; and this, by withholding the dews, and blaſting vegetation, and by ſummoning the whirlwinds which cauſe the fatal riſe of the ſand-tornados. The ſucceſſive horrors that overtook this army are depicted with the higheſt intereſt and

grandeur. They riſe in climax till the final overwhelming is thus brought to the ſhuddering imagination of the reader,

——— awhile the living hill
Heav'd with convulſive throes,—and all was ſtill!

language has nothing of more genuine ſublimity.

Turning from this dread tragedy, the Botanic Queen aſſumes a livelier ſtrain, and compares her little miniſters to the planets in an orrery. That beautiful machine is deſcribed with it's fairy-mimicry of the ſtellar evolutions. She exhorts her nymphs to the practice of ſeveral benevolent operations, guarding againſt the miſchiefs of elementary exceſs. Hannibal's renowned march over the Alps, againſt tyrannic Rome, and the ſuppoſed means by which he facilitated his progreſs, are held up to their imitation. To this ſucceeds an exhortation to feed the embryons,

and

and forward the parturition of trees, plants, and flowers. For thoſe offices a medical ſimile occurs, and afterwards a ſcripture ſtory is told, Peter releaſed from priſon by an angel, and to that angel the illuſtriouſly benevolent Howard is compared.

Imputed aſſiſtance, on the part of theſe ſubterranean nymphs, in the chemical decompoſition of animal and vegetable ſubſtances, introduces the ancient fable of the ſlaughtered, buried, and aſſurgent Adonis. His ſtory is told with not leſs added poetic excellence than, with acceſſion of perſonal beauty, he is ſaid to have ariſen from the dark manſions of Proſerpine, and to have returned to Venus. Dr. Darwin's reaſons, given in the note to this paſſage, for rejecting former interpretations of that allegory, are convincing; and his ſubſtituted ſolution is not only highly ingenious, but deeply philoſophic; and good ſenſe ſanctions the conjecture.

This fable closes the address of the Goddess to her Gnomes. Their elfin flight on their appointed errands, is described with playful elegance, and compared to the successive shadows that pass over a sunny vale beneath the light clouds. With that comparison the second Canto terminates. If the Gnomes make their exit with less poetic splendor than their predecessors, it must be considered that the Nymphs of Fire are personages of more intrinsic dignity.

THE THIRD CANTO

Opens with a charge to the Water Nymphs, and we are told that the Goddess gives it in tones so sweet and sonorous as to shake the wrinkling fountains, curl the deep wells, rimple the lakes, and thrill the rivers.

The three first words selected to express the different kind of actual vibration on the fountains,

fountains, wells, and lakes, are inſtances of that nice diſcrimination which imparts ſo much vitality to verſe, and gives back to the reader his faded recollection of the objects of nature in their comparative diſtinctions. Though he may have viewed them often with unexamining eyes, yet no ſooner do they ariſe before him on the poetic page than he recogniſes their truth with the thrill of delight; for who that looks into the records of the Muſes, however inſenſible to the creations of Fancy, can view without pleaſure the faithfully reflected image of nature in the ſubtle variety of her lineaments.

> Thick as the dews which deck the morning flowers,
> Or rain-drops twinkling in the ſun-bright ſhowers,
> Fair nymphs, emerging in pellucid bands,
> Riſe, as ſhe turns, and whiten all the lands.

Their miſtreſs tells them alſo, how much ſhe is conſcious of their power and uſe, in the formation, ſuſtenance, and protection of

the vegetable world. In the exordium of this charge we meet a couplet rivalling in picturesque beauty the lines in Collins' charming, though rhymeless Ode to Evening, when he tells the grey-stoled personage, that, from his hut on the mountain side, he loves to contemplate, in a showery twilight,

> The hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires,
> And hear their simple bells, and mark o'er all
> Her dewy fingers draw
> The gradual, dusky veil.

The Botanic Queen says to her aqueous ministry in these rival lines,

> Your lucid hands condense, with fingers chill,
> The blue mist hovering round the gelid hill.

This charge has one harsh line; thus,

> And as below she braids her hyaline hair.

The employment gentle, the attitude graceful, that harshness of measure which

is

is often ſkilful when uſed to expreſs violent exertion, is here cenſurable.

Theſe new vicegerents are praiſed as feeding the harveſt, filling the wide-ribbed arch with hurrying torrents, to aſſiſt the operation of the mill and the progreſs of the barge, and leading the refluent water to it's parent main. Theſe operations on the water induce a ſimile for the progreſſive and returning courſe of the blood. The purpureal tint it gives to the fair complexion of youthful beauty; the warm glow to her hair, the laugh of health to her lip, and it's lightning to her eyes, form a lovely picture in this ſimile; and it cloſes with a medical obſervation in a fine poetic figure.

Juſt diſcernment will not ceaſe to admire the facile ſucceſs and artful grace with which this Poet ſubdues the difficulty of rendering all ſorts of ſcience ſubſervient to the purpoſes of high heroic verſe; or to obſerve how ſeldom even the moſt

technical terms diminiſh the harmony of his meaſure, or the elegance of his imagery.

Mighty ſway is attributed to the aqueous ladies over thoſe realms of ſcale and ſhell, which are covered by the ſea; and they are conſidered as architects of the pearly palaces of the fiſh. The modern experiment of ſmoothing rough waves with oil, is conſidered as their ſuggeſtion; alſo various ſub-marine and benevolent influences. To them the birth of rivers, from the Alpine ſnows. The Danube, the Rhine, and the Tiber, are mentioned; the laſt as flowing through his degenerate realms with diminiſhed waters. The features of that degeneracy are marked; the race of patriots, heros, and legiſlators, long ſince become ſingers, dancers, and monks; and the paſſage concludes with this ſublime picture of the preſent ſtate of that long-renowned river:

Parts with chill ſtream, the dim religious bower,
Time-moulder'd baſtion, and diſmantled tower;

By

By alter'd fanes, and hamleſs villas glides,
And claſſic domes, that tremble on his ſides;
Sighs o'er each broken urn and yawning tomb,
And mourns the fall of Liberty and Rome.

Rivers being the ſubject, the Nile and it's annual overflow, gives riſe to grand allegoric imagery, and to nobly-imagined ſcenes. That overflow is aſcribed to the monſoon winds, which deluge Nubia and Abyſſinia with rain.

Sailing in air, when dark Monſoon enſhrouds
His tropic mountains in a night of clouds;
Or, drawn by whirlwinds, from the Line returns,
And ſhowers on Afric all his thouſand urns;
High o'er his head the beams of Sirius glow,
And, dog of Nile, Anubis, barks below.
Nymphs, you from cliff to cliff attendant guide,
In headlong cataracts, the impetuous tide;
Or lead o'er waſtes of Abyſſinian ſands
The bright expanſe to Egypt's ſhowerleſs lands.

Her towns, her temples, and ſultry plains are contraſted with a ſublime deſcription of Hecla and his burning mountain. It's column of boiling water is transformed into a ma-

a malignant Sorcereſs, whoſe baleful ſpells had been broken by the power of theſe benevolent Naiads.

The hypotheſis, that warm ſalubrious ſprings are produced by ſteam ariſing from water falling on ſubterranean fires, and that this ſteam is condenſed between the ſtrata of incumbent mountains, and collected into ſprings, occaſions a ſportive addreſs to Buxton. It is ſucceeded by an elegant compliment to the Ducheſs of Devonſhire, leading a train of Graces from Chatſworth to that tepid fountain. From the epithet *fairy* given to legions, we ſhould ſuppoſe theſe Graces a part of the machinery of the Poet; but, as the paſſage proceeds, it deſcribes beautiful young women bathing with ſuch exquiſite preciſion, that the ſcene of action conſidered, it becomes impoſſible to contemplate them as *ideal* perſonages, eſpecially as the laſt couplet is utterly at war with aerial ſubſtance; thus,

Round

Round each fair Nymph her dropping mantle clings,
And Loves emerging ſhake their ſhowery wings.

The Loves, which are indiſputably machinery, confuſe the picture, if the Nymphs alſo are of that ſpecies. The expreſſion, *fairy legions*, is to be regretted; it renders the lively and lovely deſcription amenable to Dr. Johnſon's cenſure of a paſſage in one of our poets, "that it is metaphoric "in one point of view, and literal in "another."

The Duke of Devonſhire's public ſpirit and architectural taſte, next become the theme, and they involve a charming picture of the Creſcent, that gem of Grecian art in Britain; and of the new plantations which ſurround it. Derbyſhire ſtone has an amber tint, and hence the Buxton Creſcent riſes a golden palace in the deſert.

The Goddeſs next congratulates her Water Nymphs on having celebrated the odd

odd nuptials of pure Air and inflammable Gas. We had heard of their courtſhip earlier in the poem. That courtſhip, and this their marriage, forms one of the wildeſt extravagances of the work; but the Homeric fable, which illuſtrates the airy bride and groom, is charming in the firſt degree. Juno, attired by Venus, to captivate Jove. With the moſt luxuriant fancy, and with new circumſtances, this little drama riſes again on the Darwinian page. It will not loſe, but gain in a juſt eſtimation of poetic merit, by compariſon with the tranſlations, by Cowper and Pope, of this celebrated part of the Greek Poet's machinery. Let them be compared, and firſt Cowper's literal tranſlation, firſt edition.

——— Firſt, ſhe lav'd all o'er
Her beauteous body with ambroſial lymph;
Then poliſh'd it with richeſt oil divine,
Of boundleſs fragrance. Oil, that in the courts
Eternal only ſhaken through the ſkies

Breath'd

Breath'd odours, and through all the diſtant earth *.
Her whole fair body with theſe ſweets bedow'd,
She paſs'd the comb through her ambroſial hair,
And braided her light locks ſtreaming profuſe
From her immortal brows; with golden ſtuds
She made her gorgeous mantle faſt before;
Etherial texture, labour of the hands
Of Pallas, beautified with various arts,
And brac'd it with a zone, fring'd all around
An hundred fold; her pendants, triple gemm'd,
Luminous, graceful in her ears ſhe hung †.
And covering all her glories with a veil
Sun-bright, new woven, bound to her fair feet
Her ſandals elegant. Thus full attir'd
In all her ornaments, ſhe iſſued forth,
And beck'ning Venus from the other powers
Of Heav'n apart, the Goddeſs thus beſpake.

Pope's tranſlation of the ſame paſſage.

Here firſt ſhe bathes, and round her body pours
Soft oils of fragrance, and ambroſial ſhowers.
The winds perfum'd, the balmy gale convey
Through heav'n, through earth, and all th' aerial way.
Spirit divine! whoſe exhalation greets
The ſenſe of Gods with more than mortal ſweets.

* Obſcure and very awkward expreſſion. † Moſt unpoetic.

Thus,

Thus, while ſhe breath'd of heav'n, with decent pride
Her artful hands the radiant treſſes tied;
Part o'er her head in ſhining ringlets roll'd,
Part o'er her ſhoulders wav'd like melted gold;
Around her neck a heavenly mantle flow'd
That rich with Pallas' labour'd colours glow'd;
Large claſps of gold the foldings gather'd round;
A golden zone her ſwelling boſom bound;
Far-beaming pendants tremble in her ear,
Each gem illumin'd with a triple ſtar;
Then o'er her head ſhe caſts a veil more white
Than new-fall'n ſnow, and dazzling as the light;
Laſt, her fair feet celeſtial ſandals grace.
Thus iſſuing radiant, with majeſtic pace,
Forth from the dome th' imperial Goddeſs moves,
And calls the mother of the Smiles and Loves.

Pope has ſhown better taſte in female dreſs than his maſter. A zone with an hundred folds of fringe upon it, muſt be a very heavy and inelegant ornament. The zone of plain gold, ſubſtituted by the rhyme tranſlator, is grander and more graceful as well as more ſimple.

Darwin, who gives this fable after his own manner, tells us, that Venus not only lent

lent the ceſtus, but attired the Goddeſs herſelf; and paſſing over the claſſic ceremony of the bath, and the operation of the oils, which perhaps he thought too Hottentotiſh, he deſcribes more conciſely, yet not leſs brilliantly, this magnificent labour of the toilette; thus,

So, rob'd by Beauty's Queen, with ſofter charms,
Saturnia woo'd the Thunderer to her arms;
O'er her fair limbs a veil of light ſhe ſpread,
And bound a ſtarry diadem on her head;
Long braids of pearls her golden treſſes grac'd,
And the charm'd ceſtus ſparkled round her waiſt.

The ceſtus is here a viſible and brilliant ornament, inſtead of being, as Homer afterwards tells us, *hid* in Juno's boſom. Pope, in a note to this paſſage, obſerves, that, by this diſpoſal, the Poet meant to convey an idea of the matron-like modeſty of Juno, who *conceals* what is to render her engaging; while Venus, wearing the ceſtus in open ſight, oſtentatiouſly diſplays the means by which ſhe captivates: but

this ſort of leſſer morality belonged not to the times in which Homer lived; neither is peculiar delicacy at all characteriſtic of the Juno he has drawn. His more probable reaſon for making her hide this ornamental ſpell, was the danger that Jupiter, if he ſaw the borrowed zone, ſo often ſeen on the perſon of his daughter, would know it, and, conſcious of it's power to excite paſſion, would have been aware of the deſign of his wife, and either not allowed of the interview, or diſarmed the girdle of it's magic. Supreme wiſdom muſt have foiled *diſcovered* art. Neither of theſe ſuppoſitions occurred to Dr. Darwin, or perhaps his Juno alſo had hidden her gay taliſman.

Homer expreſsly ſays, Juno did not take her chariot on this conjugal viſit; but Darwin allots her that mode of conveyance, and the change enabled him to aſſign to the Empreſs of Heaven her due pomp and ſtately

ſtately retinue. Upon this imperial and celeſtial equipage the modern poet has laviſhed all the ſplendors of his imagination. Cupid is the charioteer, and Zephyr flies before, ſhowering roſes from his wings; Naiads and Dryads, Fawns and Wood-Boys are in the train. The reader is empowered, by diſtinctneſs of poetic deſcription, to purſue the chariot with his eye, as it aſcends the ſteeps of Ida, now loſt in it's thick woods, now in full blaze, winding around it's rocks.

But ſurely there is an error of judgment in making Cupid wing an arrow to the breaſt of Jove, as the retinue approaches, ſince that mode of awakening the paſſions of Jupiter for his queen, renders the charmed ceſtus a ſuperfluous gift. And again, this gay car is repreſented as drawn by doves; from which it ſhould ſeem that Venus had lent her equipage, as well as her girdle, on that occaſion.

The addreſs of the God to his Goddeſs is incomparably more elegant in the verſe of Darwin than in the tranſlation of Cowper, or even of Pope. Thus ſays Cowper, with all that cramp literality which hobbles through his verſion.

Soon he accoſted her, and thus inquir'd:
" Juno, what region ſeeking, haſt thou left
" Th' Olympian ſummit, and haſt here arriv'd
" With neither ſteeds nor chariot in thy train?"

POPE.

Fix'd on her eyes he fed his eager look,
Then preſs'd her hand, and thus tranſported ſpoke:
" Why comes my Goddeſs from th' etherial ſky,
" And not her ſteeds, and flaming chariot nigh?"

DARWIN.

Pierc'd on his throne, the ſtarting Thund'rer turns,
Melts with ſoft ſighs, with kindling rapture burns;
Claſps her fair hand, and eyes, in fond amaze,
The bright Intruder with enamour'd gaze:
" And leaves my Goddeſs, like a blooming bride,
" The fanes of Argos, for the rocks of Ide;
" Her gorgeous palaces, and amaranth bowers,
" For cliff-top'd mountains, and aerial towers?"

But to reſume the Botanic Goddeſs and her enumeration of the intereſting employments of her third claſs of Nymphs; their diſpoſal of all thoſe bright waters which make Britain irriguous, verdant, and fertile. We find this beautiful couplet in the courſe of the paſſage:

> You, with nice ear, in tiptoe trains pervade
> Dim walks of morn *, or evening's ſilent ſhade.

She then places them on the ſhore, liſtening to it's pauſing murmurs, and to the ſong of the Nereid, as on her playful ſea-horſe ſhe glides over the twilight-main. Another exquiſite picture ariſes, profeſſedly from an antique gem. Great ſkill is ſhown in varying the attitude, appearance, and employments of this beautiful Sea-Nymph, on *her* voyage, from thoſe of Europa, croſſing the ſea on her bull, in the preced-

* What exquiſite picture!

ing Canto. Her's is a day, and this is a night voyage. Europa draws up her feet beneath her robe, fearful of touching the water; the *ſecure* Nereid drops them careleſsly down. Europa clings timidly round the neck of her Taurus, and reſts her cheek upon the curls of his forehead, while her mantle floats unheeded on the breeze. The Nereid has no apprehenſion; ſhe and her ſteed are both in their element. She gives him the rein, lifts her eyes to the evening ſtar, and ſings the birth of Venus. She reſtrains her arching veil, with her hands, from floating on the gales of night, while the mantle of Europa was abandoned to the day-breeze. The Nereid is without fear, and therefore attends to the preſervation of her dreſs; Europa is ſomewhat frightened, and therefore pays no attention to hers. Theſe differences, however apparently, are not really trivial. The mere verſifier knows not *how* to create them.

The

The Poet knows their importance; how much they will inſpirit his portraits, and diſtinguiſh them from each other. In the progreſs of this epiſode the Nereid looſes her veil (we may conclude the wind had fallen) and we meet the following deſcription of a very graceful operation, that of a lovely female combing her laviſh treſſes:

> O'er her fair brow her pearly comb unfurls
> Her beryl locks, and parts the waving curls;
> Each tangled braid, with gliſt'ning teeth unbinds,
> And with the floating treaſure muſks the winds.

This is not a repetition of the employment of the new-born Venus, in the ſecond Canto. She had recently emerged, and therefore *her* hair muſt neceſſarily hang uncurled, and ſhe is in the attitude of wringing the water from her golden treſſes; than which no poſition can be more favourable to female ſymmetry.

Doctor Darwin's poem paints every attitude and employment which, in either

ſex, can be rendered elegant. No author ever had a mind more keenly awakened to grace in all its varieties, or could more exquiſitely paint it.

That perception, and that talent, the, in his claſs of compoſition, peerleſs Richardſon poſſeſſed in an equal degree. No proſe-writer ever was, or perhaps ever will be, ſo great a painter; and to that power what a conſtellation of other endowments contributed to immortalize the pages of Clariſſa and Grandiſon! Novels no longer, but Engliſh Claſſics, tranſlated into every European language, and in all foreign countries conſidered as ſome of the nobleſt efforts of Britiſh Genius.

But the Darwinian Nereid has been left a little before her time; other circumſtances attend her, too poetic to remain unnoticed. Her ſong "thrills the waves;" and the ſhadowy Forms of Night gleam on the margin of the ſhore, "with pointed

"ears,"

"ears," to denote the act of liſtening. Perhaps that characteriſtic had been better omitted, ſince it belongs to brute, not to human animals, and is at war with the imaginary grace of theſe twilight forms. The Moon pauſes, and the Stars ſhoot from their ſpheres to liſten. That laſt circumſtance is evidently from Shakeſpear's allegory in The Midſummer Night's Dream, alluding to the conſpiracies formed in favor of the impriſoned Queen of Scotland, by the Duke of Norfolk, and other noblemen of the court of Elizabeth. This is the allegory:

I ſaw a Mermaid on a Dolphin's back
Uttering ſuch dulcet and harmonious ſounds,
That the rude ſea grew civil at her ſong,
And certain ſtars ſhot madly from their ſpheres,
To hear the Sea-Maid's muſic.

That he might guard againſt the diſpleaſure of Elizabeth for this ſally, it is immediately followed by as high an allegoric compliment paid to herſelf.

On the Poet's diſmiſſal of the Nereid, the death of Mrs. French of Derby, is introduced as a ſubject of ſorrow to the Water-Nymphs of its river. This picture of Milcena is very lovely, ſtraying with her infants on the banks of the Derwent, and pondering, with ſcientific eye, the inſects and plants on the ſhores of that ſtream. There is a tender ſtrain of morality in this paſſage; but the annexed epitaph on Mrs. French, however beautiful as poetry, is by no means fit for it's originally purpoſed ſituation, a tombſtone in the great church at Derby. The author of theſe memoirs is ignorant whether, or not, it is there inſcribed. "Clouds of ſilver, and Beauty, "pleading for her huſband's errors at the "throne of God," may form a very poetical, but it is a very heatheniſh reſurrection.

The mention of Brindley, the Father of commercial Canals, has propriety as well as happineſs. Similitude for their courſe,

to the ſinuous track of a ſerpent, produces a fine picture of a gliding animal of that ſpecies, and it is ſucceeded by theſe ſupremely happy lines:

So, with ſtrong arm, immortal Brindley leads
His long canals, and parts the velvet meads;
Winding in lucid lines, the watery maſs
Mines the firm rock, or loads the deep moraſs;
With riſing locks a thouſand hills alarms,
Flings o'er a thouſand ſtreams it's ſilver arms;
Feeds the long vale, the nodding woodland laves,
And Plenty, Arts, and Commerce, freight the waves.

Nymphs, who erewhile on Brindley's early bier,
On ſnow-white boſoms ſhower'd th' inceſſant tear,
Adorn his tomb!—Oh, raiſe the marble buſt,
Proclaim his honors, and protect his duſt!
With urns inverted, round the ſacred ſhrine
Their ozier wreaths let weeping Naiads twine,
While on the top mechanic Genius ſtands,
Counts the fleet waves, and balances the ſands!

There is a note to this paſſage, which urges the duty of erecting a monument to Brindley in Lichfield Cathedral. Certainly it would be to the credit of thoſe who ſhould

ſhould ſubſcribe to raiſe it, ſince the county of Stafford has been ſo materially benefited by his ſucceſsful plans; but in the above eulogium, Dr. Darwin has given him a more enduring memorial than ſtone or marble could beſtow.

The mechaniſm of the pump is next deſcribed with curious ingenuity. Common as is the machine, it is not unworthy of a place in this ſplendid compoſition, as being, after the ſinking of wells, the earlieſt of thoſe inventions, which, in ſituations of exterior aridneſs, gave ready acceſſion to water. This familiar object is illuſtrated by a picture of Maternal Beauty adminiſtering ſuſtenance to her Infant. To that ſucceeds an energetic reproof, and pathetic admonition to mothers in affluent life, whom indolence, or diſſipation, ſeduces to the unnatural neglect of that delightful duty. For an infant ſlumbering on the maternal boſom which has nouriſhed him, there

there is the following allegoric ſimile, of no common elegance:

Thus, charm'd to ſweet repoſe, when twilight hours
Shed their ſoft influence on celeſtial bowers,
The cherub, Innocence, with ſmile divine,
Shuts his white wings, and ſleeps on Beauty's ſhrine.

The Ode to Morning, in Elfrida, contains a nearly reſembling image; thus:

Away, ye Elves, away,
Shrink at ambroſial morning's living ray!
That living ray, whoſe power benign
Unfolds this ſcene of glory to our eye,
Where, thron'd in artleſs majeſty,
The cherub Beauty ſits on Nature's ruſtic ſhrine.

Probably to the involuntary plagiariſm of forgotten impreſſion, we owe this ſiſter-picture on the page of Dr. Darwin.

The uſe of water by the fire-engine next occurs. Poetry has nothing more ſublime than this, the preceding picture of a Town on Fire;

From dome to dome when flames infuriate climb,
Sweep the long ſtreet, inveſt the tower ſublime;

Gild

Gild the tall vanes amid th' aſtoniſh'd night,
And reddening heaven returns the ſanguine light;
While, with vaſt ſtrides and briſtling hair, aloof
Pale Danger glides along the falling roof;
And giant Terror, howling in amaze,
Moves his dark limbs acroſs the lurid blaze;
Nymphs, you firſt taught the gelid waves ſo riſe,
Hurl'd in reſplendent arches to the ſkies;
In iron cells condens'd the airy ſpring,
And imp'd the torrent, with unfailing wing;
On the fierce flame the ſhower impetuous falls,
And ſudden darkneſs ſhrouds the ſhatter'd walls;
Steam, ſmoke, and duſt, in blended volumes roll,
And Night and Silence repoſſeſs the pole.

Dryden, in his Annus Mirabilis, has deſcribed the great fire in London. Some very fine lines occur in that deſcription, but it is prolix and feeble in compariſon with the above.

The melancholy circumſtances of the Woodmaſon family, and that of Lady Moleſworth, each of whom ſuffered dreadfully by fire, are next pourtrayed with much pathetic ſolemnity, and the Water-Nymphs

Nymphs are reproached for not having prevented thoſe evils.

After this mournful little drama, the Botanic Queen allots new taſks to theſe her hand-maids in the care of vegetation, and they are beautifully ſpecified. To them ſucceeds an highly intereſting picture of Sympathy in a female form, bending over a rock to aſſiſt the ſhip-wrecked mariners; ſhe is ſhown afterwards as ſupporting feeble Age on her arm, pouring balm into the wounds of Sorrow; ſnatching the dagger from Deſpair; lulling Envy to ſleep, and while ſhe repoſes, ſtealing her envenomed arrows from her quiver. An animated eulogium on a benevolent young lady of Ireland, diverſifies theſe commiſſions; alſo three of Hercules' labors. A flooded country is preſented in the deluged Etolia; and the Water Fiend, who cauſed the inundation, and whom Hercules ſubdues a ſecond time, when aſſuming the form

form of a ſnake, it attempts to eſcape from the hero. It is thus admirably pictured:

Then to a ſnake the finny Demon turn'd,
His lengthen'd form, with ſcales of ſilver burn'd;
Laſh'd, with reſiſtleſs ſweep, his dragon-train,
And ſhot meandering o'er th' affrighted plain.

Perhaps the deſcription of the Fiend's next transformation into a Bull, is not eminently judicious; the terms "ſilver "hoofs," and "flowery meadows," which might well have ſuited the gentle bull of Europa, are too nice and gay to harmonize well with the enraged monſter, one of whoſe horns was torn off by Hercules. Of the habits and manners of that formidable Brute, when incenſed, a very inferior Poet, lately deceaſed, has given a more impreſſive picture. We ſometimes find one or two good paſſages in the writings of ordinary verſifiers. Sternhold's and Hopkins' nonſenſical and vulgar tranſlation of the Pſalms, contain eight lines which Pope profeſſed

profeſſed to envy. Though Hurdis was choſen Profeſſor of Poetry in Oxford contrary to Pope's precept,

Let ſuch teach others who themſelves excel,

yet he has given a deſcription of the only very terrific Engliſh animal, which, when weeded of a long interrupting digreſſion in the middle of it, about a thunder-ſtorm, forms the moſt natural portrait of a malicious Bull that can perhaps be found in any of our poets; thus,

——— 'Tis pleaſure to approach,
And, by the ſtrong fence ſhielded, view ſecure
Thy terrors, Nature, in the ſavage Bull.
Soon as he marks me, be the tyrant fierce,
To earth deſcends his head; hard breathe his lungs
Upon the duſty ſod.—A ſulky leer
Gives double horror to the frowning curls
That wrap his forehead; and ere long is heard,
From the deep cavern of his lordly throat,
The growl inſufferable. *—Tramples then

* Here comes in the impertinent thunder ſtorm.

The

The furly Brute, impatient of diſdain,
And ſpurns the ſoil with irritated hoof;
Himſelf inhaler of the duſty ſod;
Himſelf inſulted by the pebbly ſhower,
Which his vain fury raiſes. Nothing fear'd,
Let him, incens'd, from agitated lungs
Blow his ſhrill trump acute till echo ring,
And, with a leer of malice, ſteal away,
Aſſault and vengeance ſwearing ere he long!

The laſt command of the Botanic Goddeſs to her Water-Nymphs, enforces their duties to plants and flowers; to render the vales irriguous, and to feed with their rills the floral and herbaceous roots. To the courſe of this moiſt nutriment through the vegetable fibres, is compared that of the chyle through the human frame; and to that, another ſimile ſucceeds. As the firſt is ſcientific, ſo is the ſecond picturesque; it is a Turkiſh pilgrimage to Mecca, conſiſting of various caravans on their road over the ſultry and ſandy deſert, and meeting with a pure rill, which, deſcending from diſtant rocks, had taken it's courſe through

through the waſte plain. The parched Travellers alight, kneel on the brink in grateful joy, and, bending over it, aſſuage their thirſt. This rill ſomewhat ſuddenly becomes a lake, and reflects the eager and delighted multitude. With this little ſcene the commiſſions to the Water-Nymphs conclude, and their obedient flight is ſcarcely leſs poetically featured than that of the Nymphs of Fire. The ſimilies, which illuſtrate the flight of the aqueous miniſters, are the evolutions of the water-ſpider, and the exerciſe of ſkaiting amongſt the natives of northern climates. The laſt is thus admirably deſcribed:

So where the North congeals his watry maſs,
Piles high his ſnows, and floors his ſeas with glaſs,
While many a month, unknown to warmer rays,
Marks it's ſlow chronicle by lunar days;
Stout youths and ruddy maids, a ſportive train,
Leave the white ſhil and ruſh upon the main.
From iſle to iſle the moon-bright ſquadrons ſtray,
And win, in graceful curves, their eaſy way;

On ſtep alternate borne, with balance nice
Hang o'er the gliding ſteel, and hiſs along the ice.

FOURTH AND LAST CANTO OF THE ECONOMY OF VEGETATION,

Conſiſts of a charge to the Sylphs, as benevolent ſpirits, to protect the vegetable ſubſtances, after they had emerged to light and air; to defend them from all the malignant operations of nature, and to cheriſh and aſſiſt the influence they may receive from all her vital and benign powers.

The deadly and ſalubrious winds; the volcanic and peſtilential airs; the Tornado, dreadful to mariners, &c.; every thing here has animal life and conſciouſneſs. It was the author's plan, and he could not, at leaſt in his own idea, depart from it with propriety. Hence, the Sylphs alſo are reminded of having preſided at the nuptials of the pureſt of the Airs with Light. The paſſage which uſhers in this whimſical marriage,

marriage, is very beautiful, the expreſſion, "ſimpering lips," excepted; but it was difficult to find variety of terms equally happy where the effect of pleaſurable ſenſations on the countenance muſt ſo often be deſcribed. From theſe aerial nuptials vital ſpirit is ſuppoſed to proceed, which pervades and animates all nature. The loves and marriage of Cupid and Pſyche are preſented, poetically pictured from the well-known gems. This life-infuſing air is contraſted with the Syroc of Italy, and the Simoon of the African deſert. The laſt is preſented as a Demon. Univerſal perſonification was the order of the Muſe in this work, not to be infringed; elſe, when circumſtances are in themſelves ſublime (and moſt things terrible in nature become ſublime in poetry), they are more likely to be of diminiſhed than increaſed force, by the addition of *fabled* endowment. A compariſon between the Simoon

deſcribed literally by Southey, in his Joan of Arc, and figuratively by Darwin, will perhaps evince the truth of this obſervation.

The Botanic Queen ſays to her Sylphs,

> Arreſt Simoon amid his waſte of ſand,
> The poiſon'd javlin balanc'd in his hand!
> Fierce on blue ſtreams he rides the tainted air,
> Points his keen eye, and waves his whiſtling hair;
> While, as he turns, the undulating ſoil
> Rolls it's red waves, and billowy deſerts boil.

This is a fine picture of the Demon of Peſtilence. The ſpeed of his approach is marked by the ſtrong current of air in which he paſſed, and by the term *whiſtling* annexed to his hair. The winds have hitherto, almoſt excluſively, poſſeſſed that term. Here transferred to the lifted hair of the Demon, it increaſes the terrific power of his approach. But let the Simoon be viewed where it's terrible graces are *native*, and

and no attempt made to heighten them by allegory.

JOAN OF ARC, 10th BOOK.

——— Ominous fear
Seizes the traveller o'er the trackleſs ſands,
Who marks the dread Simoon acroſs the waſte
Sweep it's ſwift peſtilence. To earth he falls,
Nor dares give utterance to the inward prayer,
Deeming the Genius of the deſert breathes
The purple blaſt of Death.

We are informed by travellers, that to inhale the leaſt portion of this mephitic blaſt is fatal. They therefore fall on their faces, and hold their breath till it has paſſed over them.

But the Darwinian perſonification of the Tornado ſublimely heightens the horror of that watry peſt. It ſucceeds that of the Simoon; and the Fog, inveſted with animality, forms an immediate and ſtriking contraſt to the preceding monſters. It is drawn with ſuch ſingular felicity of

imagination that there is no reſiſting the deſire of quoting the paſſage here :

Sylphs, with light ſhafts, you pierce the drowſy Fog,
That lingering ſlumbers on the ſedge-wove bog,
And with webb'd feet o'er midnight meadows creeps,
Or flings his hairy limbs o'er ſtagnant deeps.

The benevolent little ſpirits are then exhorted to combat Contagion, ſtealing from charnel-vaults to bring death to the people. The plague, which in 1636 raged in Holland, is here introduced, with a beautiful ſtory of faithful Love prevailing over the deſire of ſelf-preſervation. A young maid is firſt ſeized in a, till then, uninfected family. This admirable line denotes the dread of it's other individuals to approach, aſſiſt, or comfort her,

And ſtarting Friendſhip ſhunn'd her as ſhe paſs'd.

Perceiving herſelf deſerted, and fearing to ſpread the infection amongſt thoſe ſhe loved, ſhe ſeeks the garden, determined to die

die there. Her betrothed lover hears of her ſituation, and purſues her thither; raiſes a tent; procures her food, covering, and medicines; binds her fevered brows, and ſtrews aromatic herbs and flowers upon her pillow. He eſcapes the contagion himſelf, and reſtores his beloved miſtreſs to health. The Poet has very ſweetly told this intereſting tale; a ſingle epithet is perhaps the only word it contains which could be altered to advantage. It is in the following line,

And claſp'd the *bright* infection in his arms.

The adjective *bright* is too gay for it's ſituation; *fair*, or *lov'd*, would be more ſubdued, and in better keeping with the mournful tenderneſs of the narration.

Leſs bold, ſays the Poet, was Leander, eying, as he ſwam, the love-lighted tower. Leſs bold alſo, Tobias, inſtructed by an angel to drive away the demon from the fatal bride.

The Sylphs are now applauded by their Queen for having inſtructed Torricelli and Boyle, concerning the properties of air, it's preſſure and elaſticity. The operations of the weather-glaſs and air-pump are deſcribed with philoſophic accuracy and poetic elegance. Young Roſſiere's dire fate, precipitated from his flaming montgolfier, comes forward here, and is pictured with great poetic ſtrength; nor is the illuſtration of that lamentable event, by the fable of Icarus, leſs happy in it's novel and mournful graces; his faithleſs and ſcattered plumage dancing on the wave; the Mermaids decking his watry tomb, ſtrewing over his corſe the pearly ſea-flowers, and ſtriking, in the coral towers, the paſſing bell, which echos through the caves of Ocean! Surely it is not poſſible to admire too fondly the beautiful and exhauſtleſs varieties of this darling Bard of Fancy.

Critics have aſſerted, that the poetic mind

mind has little efflorescence after middle life; that, however the judgment may strengthen, the vivid luxuriance of the imagination abates. Milton's Paradise Lost, Darwin's Botanic Garden, and Cowper's Task, each began after life had many years declined from it's meridian, confute the dogma. Dr. Johnson has combated it's fallacy, and with more truth observed, that so long as the understanding retains it's strength, the fancy, from time to time, acquires added vigor and new stores of imagery. Nor does the extreme poetic inferiority of the Paradise Regained to the Paradise Lost, at all disprove the converse proposition. We are to look for that inferiority in the so much more restraining nature of the *subject*, for poetry, above all others, improper. Poetry! to whose very existence, if it is to deserve it's name, an infinitely larger portion of inventive and figurative ornament is necessary than the

hallowed

hallowed ſobriety of the New Teſtament and it's myſteries, can admit without the moſt revolting impropriety. It's choice, as the theme of an Epic Poem, was a radical error, which neceſſarily involved thoſe long trains of comparative proſaiciſm, over which we yawn, however ſometimes awakened by noble paſſages to recogniſe ſtrength, which, though ſeldom put forth, we feel to be undiminiſhed; to diſcern ſome rays of light which, amidſt their infrequency, we yet perceive to be unfaded.

Freſh commendation is next given to the Sylphs for their inſpirations in the mind of Dr. Prieſtley, concerning his analyſis of the atmoſphere. The paſſage is moſt poetic, although purely chemical. Air calcining the phlogiſtic ores is termed the marriage of Ether with the Mine. Theſe nuptials are illuſtrated by the retold ſtory of Pluto and Proſerpine. There is much propriety in this illuſtration, ſince Lord Bacon has explained

explained that fable as an hieroglyphic alluſion, to ſignify "the combination, or "marriage of etherial ſpirit with earthly "materials."

A whimſical poſſibility is next ſuppoſed: that Dr. Prieſtley's diſcoveries will hereafter enable adventurers to travel beneath the ocean in large inverted ſhips and diving balloons. A note to this paſſage aſſerts, that the experiment was ſucceſsfully made by a Frenchman in the reign of James the Firſt, and it ſtates the particulars. A ſplendid ſub-marine voyage next occurs. It is to the warm tropic ſeas and ſhadowy ice-iſles of the polar regions, and to be performed by Britannia. Her tears are to flow as ſhe paſſes over the ſad and viſible remains of ſhip-wrecked lovers, mercantile and ſcientific adventurers, particularly thoſe of Day and Spalding, who each periſhed in their diving-bells. Here the deplored fate

of

of Captain Pierce, his family and fellow-voyagers, thus forms a tragic drama:

Oft o'er thy lovely daughters, hapleſs Pierce!
Her ſighs ſhall breathe, her ſorrows dew their hearſe.
With brow upturn'd to heav'n, "We will not part,"
He cried, and claſp'd them to his aching heart.
Daſh'd in dread conflict on the rocky grounds,
Craſh the ſhock'd maſts, the ſtaggering wreck rebounds;
Through gaping ſeams the ruſhing deluge ſwims;
Chills their pale boſoms, bathes their ſhuddering limbs;
Climbs their white ſhoulders, buoys their ſtreaming hair,
And the laſt ſea-ſhriek bellows in the air.
Each, with loud ſobs, their tender ſire careſs'd,
And gaſping, ſtrain'd him cloſer to her breaſt.
Stretch'd on one bier they ſleep beneath the brine,
And their white bones with ivory arms entwine.

The third, fourth, and fifth, couplets of the above quotation, are extremely fine pictures, and "ſound never echoed ſenſe" with more ſolemn horror than "and the "laſt ſea-ſhriek bellowed in the air." The deſcription ought to have cloſed with that line, and the next couplet ſhould have immediately

mediately followed the paternal exclamation. Beyond the utmoſt power of the pencil do the ſix grand verſes of this paſſage image death by ſhipwreck; but the "white bones and "ivory arms" of the concluding line, are every way exceptionable. They diſturb the awful impreſſion made on the mind by the laſt ſea-ſhriek. Aiming to be pathetic they are in reality ludicrous, the ivory *arms* of *bones!* The bones of ivory arms we might underſtand, though it would be affected expreſſion, but the converſe terms ſeem nonſenſe. One of the firſt of our exiſting poets, Mr. Crowe, public orator at Oxford, whoſe compoſitions, by their genuine excellence, atone for their too limited quantity, has told this ſad ſtory with ſolemn and ſimple beauty in his Leweſdon Hill, one of the nobleſt local poems in our language. In his *narration* we find nothing which can ſtrictly be termed picturesque, though the four *introductory* lines

are

are highly ſo; but we find a great deal of Milton's manner in the progreſs of the tale, written in view of the rocks on which the Halſewell ſtruck.

LEWESDON HILL.

See how the ſun, here clouded, afar off
Pours down the golden radiance of his light
Upon th' enridged ſea, where the black ſhip
Sails on the phoſpher-ſeaming waves.—So fair,
But falſely flattering, was yon ſurface calm,
When forth for India ſail'd, in evil hour,
That veſſel, whoſe diſaſtrous fate, when told,
Fill'd every breaſt with horror, and each eye
With piteous tears, ſo cruel was the loſs!
Methinks I ſee her, by the wintry ſtorm
Shatter'd and driven along paſt yonder iſle!
She ſtrove, her lateſt hope by ſtrength or art,
To gain the port within it; or at worſt,
To ſhun that harbourleſs and hollow coaſt,
From Portland eaſtward to the Promontory,
Where ſtill St. Albans high-built chapel ſtands.
But art nor ſtrength avail her, on ſhe drives,
In ſtorm and darkneſs, to that fatal coaſt!
And there, mid rocks and high o'erhanging cliffs,
Daſh'd piteouſly, with all her precious freight

Was

Was loſt, by Neptune's wild and foamy jaws
Swallow'd up quick! The richlieſt laden ſhip
Of ſpicy Ternate, or that, annual ſent
To the Philippines o'er the ſouthern main
From Acapulco, carrying maſſy gold,
Were poor to this; freighted with hopeful youth
And beauty, and high courage undiſmay'd
By mortal terrors; and paternal love,
Strong and unconquerable, even in death.
Alas! they periſh'd all,—all in ONE HOUR!

Reſuming the principal ſubject of theſe ſtrictures, we find the harmonic diſcoveries attributed to the aerial hand-maids. Their miſtreſs ſuppoſes them to have breathed their grand and exquiſite inſpirations into the ear of Handel; to wake the tones on the ſhell of Echo; to melt in ſweet chords upon the Eolian harp; and on the lips of Cecilia to breathe the ſong. Another lovely picture ariſes here, from an ancient gem, Cupid on a Lion's back, playing on a lute.

The Goddeſs proceeds to conſider her Nymphs

Nymphs of Air as Miniſters of Divine Vengeance on the Guilty, through the medium of tempeſts, and the peſtilential winds of the Eaſt, as Samiel, Harmattan, &c. and the ſcripture ſtory of the fate of Senacherib is told. The ravage of death, produced by thoſe peſtilential gales, forms a ſublime perſonification; thus,

Hark! o'er the camp the venom'd tempeſt ſings!
Man falls on man; on buckler buckler rings;
Groan anſwers groan; to anguiſh anguiſh yields,
And death's dread accents ſhake the tented fields.
High rears the Fiend his grinning jaws, and wide
Spans the pale nations with coloſſal ſtride;
Waves his broad falchion with uplifted hand,
And his vaſt ſhadow darkens all the land!

Whether by coincidence or plagiariſm on the part of Dr. Darwin, is uncertain, but in Mr. Sergeant's noble prophetic Ode on the Woes of the Houſe of Stuart, commencing with fair unfortunate Mary's calamities, we find the laſt ſublime image, thus,

From Orkney's ſtormy ſteep
The ſpirit of the iſles infuriate came;
Round him flaſh'd the arctic flame,
His dark cloud ſhadow'd the contentious deep!

This Ode was publiſhed in 1788. The Economy of Vegetation in 1791.

That poem proceeds with another exhortation to the etherial Cohorts to protect the vernal children; impart the taliſman which guides the veering winds, and, by it's influence, enchain Boreas and Eurus, ſo often fatal to early luxuriance, vegetable and animal. Thus ſhall they, ſhe beautifully ſays,

'Rock th' uncurtain'd cradle of the year.

The deſtruction and reproduction of the atmoſphere, is allegoriſed by a monſter of magnitude more immenſe than that of Satan, when, on the page of Milton, he ſtrides from hill to hill. This is a Camelion beneath the northern conſtellation.

We find much grandeur of fancy in this aerial giant. His groan is the thunder, his ſigh the tempeſt, as he ſteers his courſe to the ſouth, and ſpreads his ſhadowy limbs over the line, with froſt and famine in his track. The Sylphs are adjured to direct his courſe to benevolent purpoſes; to cool Arabian vales with his antarctic breathing; and, in the following harmonious line,

To ſcatter roſes o'er Zelandic ſnows.

This allegory concludes unhappily, with a perſonal compliment to Mr. Kirwan, "who has publiſhed a valuable Treatiſe "on the temperature of Climates." Thoſe compliments to ingenious profeſſors would often find their more proper place in the notes, except where they form a ſimile; but, as in this inſtance, a living man placed between the dragon wings of an imaginary and immeaſurable monſter, is a ridiculous idea.

idea. Often, through the courſe of this work, does ſuch intermixture of actual and ideal beings diſturb and interrupt, rather than agreeably diverſify, the courſe of the allegory. The ſoon-enſuing mention of the celebrated Herſchel, and his ſtellar diſcoveries, is made in the form of a ſimile, and is therefore unexceptionable; and it paſſes on to the following charming apoſtrophe to the Stars.

Roll on, ye Stars! exult in youthful prime,
Mark, with bright curves, the printleſs ſteps of Time!
Near, and more near, your beamy cars approach,
And leſſening orbs on leſſening orbs incroach.
Flowers of the ſky! ye too to age muſt yield,
Frail as your ſilken ſiſters of the field;
Star after ſtar from heavn's high arch ſhall ruſh,
Suns ſink on ſuns, on ſyſtems ſyſtems ruſh;
Headlong, extinct, to one dark centre fall,
And Death, and Night, and Chaos cover all;
Till o'er the wreck, emerging from the ſtorm,
Immortal nature lifts her changeful form;
Mounts from the funeral pyre on wings of flame,
And ſoars, and ſhines, another and the ſame.

Returning to the vegetable embryons, of which the Goddeſs, between her mention of Kirwan and Herſchel had ſpoken, ſhe thus beautifully ſays:

Lo! on each ſeed, within it's tender rind,
Life's golden threads, in endleſs circles wind;
Maze within maze the lucid webs are roll'd,
And, as they burſt, the living flames unfold.

The whole paſſage is equally fine, and cloſes thus:

Life buds, or breathes, from Indus to the Poles,
And the vaſt ſurface kindles as it rolls.

We find the ſame image applied to Light in the firſt Canto, as it is here to Vitality. Speaking of Chaos the Poet ſays:

Through all his realms the kindling Ether runs;

Yet, far from cenſuring the very infrequent repetitions, which we may find through this great work, wonder and praiſe will

will riſe in the mind of every true lover of the poetic art, contemplating that exhauſtleſs variety of ideas, imagery and expreſſion, which light up the ſubject with a thouſand torches, kindled at the orb of Genius.

Skilful blendings of philoſophic knowledge with poetic fancy, now occur in the birth and growth of plants and flowers. They are compared to the kindling and expanſion of animal life in the Crocodile, burſting from it's egg on the ſhores of the Nile. It is a grand picture, though of ſomewhat forced introduction. The charge on it's progreſs contains inſtruction to gardeners, though it is addreſſed to the Sylphs, and adorned by the parable of Aaron's rod. The baniſhment of noxious inſects by their cares, is enforced by the example of the Cyprepedia, a flower curiouſly reſembling the large American Spider. Linnæus aſſerts, that it catches ſmall birds

as well as inſects, and has the venomous bite of a ſerpent; and a French naturaliſt narrates, that it catches the humming-bird in it's ſtrong nets. The circumſtance is thus elegantly pictured in the Botanic Queen's horticultural adjurations,

So where the humming-bird, in Chili's bowers,
On murmuring pinions robs the pendent flowers;
Seeks where fine pores their dulcet balms diſtill,
And ſucks the treaſure with proboſcis bill,
Fell Cyprepedia, &c.

The diſeaſes of plants are next pointed out, and they are illuſtrated by a curious fact in glaſs-making. The pictures of various flowers next riſe on the page, in botanic diſcrimination, and in all the hues of poetry. The exotic wealth of the Royal Garden at Kew is celebrated; and the conſcious pride of it's river, on the occaſion, is thus ſweetly fancied;

Delighted Thames through tropic umbrage glides,
The flowers antarctic bending o'er his ſides;
Drinks the new tints, the ſcents unknown inhales,
And calls the Sons of Science to the vales.

Poetic

Poetic homage is then paid to our King and Queen, to their virtues, their taſte for Botanic Science, and to the fair human Scions which themſelves have raiſed.

The Goddeſs compliments her aerial Legions on attending the chariot of the Morning round the earth, on leading the gay Hours along the horizon; on ſhowering the light on every dun meridian, and on purſuing, from zone to zone, the perennial journey of the Spring. She commiſſions them, on this their radiant tour, to bring her rich balms from the hallowed glades of Mecca, Arabian flowers, Italian fruits, and the tea-plants of China; alſo

Each ſpicy rind which ſultry India boaſts,
Scenting the night-air round her breezy coaſts;
Roots, whoſe bold ſtems in bleak Siberia blow,
And gem with many a tint th' eternal ſnow;
Barks, whoſe broad umbrage high in ether waves
O'er Ande's ſteeps, and hides his golden caves.

Thus, with happy art, the Poet diverſifies

and animates floral enumeration with gleams of every-regioned landscape.

The Sylphs are then commanded to raise an altar to Hygeia; to call to it's rites the disperſed Siſterhood, the Water Nymphs, from their floating clouds, their waves and fountains; to ſtamp with charmed foot, and convoke the Gnomes from their ſubterranean palaces; and to beckon from their ſpheres the veſtal forms of fire; that thus, in full congregation, they may wit the Goddeſs of Health with unwearied vows. The pictureſque attitudes of ſupplication, which ſhe dictates, are eminently beautiful; and, with a patriotic apoſtrophe to Hygeia, the Britiſh Queen of Botany concludes her embaſſy.

O wave, Hygeia, o'er Britannia's throne
Thy ſerpent-wand, and mark it for thy own!
Lead round her breezy coaſts thy guardian trains,
Her nodding foreſts, and her waving plains!
Shed o'er her peopled realms thy beamy ſmile,
And with thy airy temple crown her iſle!

The

The Goddeſs of Botany now aſcends with as much elegance as ſhe had deſcended, and with more magnificence. If the reader is ſuſceptible of poetic beauty; if he can feel that what never can be ſeen in reality, may yet be painted naturally; a ſtrict ſurvey of this poetical aſcenſion will enable him to perceive, what indeed countleſs other inſtances in this Poem evince, that it's Author moſt eminently poſſeſſed that rare talent.

The Goddeſs ceas'd, and calling from afar
The wandering Zephyrs, joins them to her car;
Mounts with light bound, and graceful as ſhe bends,
Whirls the long laſh, the flexile rein extends;
On whiſpering wheels the ſilver axle ſlides,
Climbs into air, and cleaves the cryſtal tides;
Burſt from it's pearly chains, her amber hair
Streams o'er her ivory ſhoulders, buoy'd in air;
Swells her white veil, with ruby claſp confin'd
Round her fair brow, and undulates behind;
The leſſening courſers riſe in ſpiral rings,
Pierce the ſlow-ſailing clouds, and ſtretch their ſhadowy wings.

If

If we could ſee a light vehicle mount the horizon, it's wheels would whiſper, it's axle ſlide; ſo would it climb into air, ſo divide the etherial currents, as a boat divides the waves of the river or the ſea; the courſers would riſe in ſpiral rings and pervade the clouds; their wings would appear ſhadowy till they melted into air. Thus concludes the Economy of Vegetation.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VI.

We now come to yet more playful compoſition in the ſecond part of this Poem, as the floral ſyſtem is a lighter and leſs important theme than the elementary properties, however generally gay the robes in which poetic imagination has dreſſed them both; but let it never be forgotten that the ſexual nature of plants has a demonſtrated exiſtence.

The Preface to this ſecond part is a compendium of the Linnean ſyſtem. The Poem makes lively, yet very modeſt claims for the ſucceeding metamorphoſes, amid whoſe lighter graces we meet with paſſages of intrinſic grandeur and ſublimity.

LOVES

LOVES OF THE PLANTS.

In which the Poet ordains that the Muſe of Botany ſhall ſucceed to it's aſcended Empreſs, as hiſtorian of the ſcene, and dictatreſs to it's dramatis perſonæ. He introduces her by invoking, in his own perſon, the attentive ſilence of the winds, the waters, and the trees, and by requeſting the inſects to pauſe upon their wings. Eight different inſects are mentioned, and each forms a ſtriking picture of it's whole ſpecies, by the Poet having ſeized and exhibited it's moſt characteriſtic feature. He next apoſtrophiſes the Muſe who "led the "Swediſh Sage by her airy hand," intreating her to ſay how tiny Graces dwell on every leaf, and how the Pleaſures laugh in the bell of a bloſſom.

The Ovidian metamorphoſis of the flowers then commences. The floral ladies, and their harems, riſe to the amuſed eye

in all the glow of poetic colouring. Attentive to diverſify them by the varieties of landſcape, we generally find this Poet producing contraſted ſcenery by the introduction of flowers or plants which are indigenous to climates ſtrikingly the reverſe of each other. Much of that happy ſkill has been diſplayed in the Economy of Vegetation, and inſtances may be ſelected from this it's brilliant precurſor. After ſeveral plants and flowers have paſſed before us in the ſemblance of beautiful women, with their trains of adoring lovers, we find the following ſketches of contraſted landſcape attached to the hiſtory of the ſocial heath-plant, Anthoxa, or vernal graſs, and the lonely Oſmunda, which grows on moiſt rocks and in their caverns.

Two gentle ſhepherds, and their ſiſter wives,
With thee, Anthoxa, lead ambroſial lives;
Where the wide heath it's purple bed extends,
And ſcatter'd furze it's golden luſtre blends,

Clos'd

Clos'd in a green receſs, unenvied lot!
The blue ſmoke riſes from their turf-built cot;
Boſom'd in fragrance bluſh their infant train,
Eye the warm ſun, and drink the ſilver rain.
Beauteous Oſmunda ſeeks the ſilent dell,
The ivy canopy, the dripping cell.

In the deſcription of the Chondrilla and her five amicable lovers, we find, in their accordant ſympathy with each other, a ſuppoſed reſemblance to the uniſon-ſtrings of the Eolian harp; and there is a ſweet enumeration of the excellences of it's varied ſtyle of tones and expreſſion.

To the picture of the Lychnis ſucceeds that of Glorioſa Superba, with her ſucceſſive train of lovers, the ſecond number riſing to maturity when the firſt periſh. This libertine lady of the groves introduces the ſtory of the celebrated female Voluptuary, in the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, Ninon de L'Enclos, whoſe beauty and graces are recorded to have been triumphant

phant over the power of Time. The ſtory of that paſſion, ſo terrible in it's conſequences, with which ſhe unintentionally inſpired her natural ſon by Lord Jerſey of England, is finely told in this part; that ſon, totally unconſcious of his birth and fatal nearneſs of blood to the charming Madam de L'Enclos! In the firſt edition of the Loves of the Plants this extraordinary woman received both perſonal and mental injuſtice from the prelude to that ſtory. She is there repreſented by the Poet, as wrinkled, grey, and paralytic; circumſtances incompatible with the poſſibility of the attachment, and contrary to the repreſentation of her biographers. Upon their teſtimony we learn that Ninon retained a large portion of her perſonal beauty and graces to an almoſt incredible period; that it was conſiderable enough to procure her young lovers at the age of eighty,

tighty, whose paſſion for her, however inconceivable, could not be intereſted, as ſhe was not rich, and much too delicate in her ſentiments to purchaſe the attention of the other ſex.

When her ſon, by Lord Jerſey, was a young officer about Court, known to her but unknown to himſelf, Madame de L'Enclos was ſcarcely forty years old, a period at which a very captivating degree of beauty and grace is ſometimes found in the female ſex. Of their exiſtence at a conſiderably later period, the Engliſh faſhionable circles, at this hour, exhibit ſome remarkable inſtances.

In the firſt edition of this Poem what is here *fatal* ſmiles was *harlot* ſmiles, an epithet moſt injurious to Madame de L'Enclos. Her attentions to her ſon, however affectionate, muſt have been purely maternal, though ſo deplorable in their

their conſequences. The declaration by which ſhe repulſes his impious ſuit, entirely acquits her of the leaſt deſign to inſpire him with paſſion. Dr. Darwin was influenced by the author of this Memoir to reſcue the form of Ninon from the unreal deerepitude he had imputed to it, and her principles from ſuch unnatural exceſs of depravity.

If we may credit her hiſtorians, Ninon was an exception to a maxim of the Duke de Rochefaucault, which has perhaps very few exceptions, viz. " Generally ſpeaking, " the leaſt fault of an unchaſte woman is " her unchaſtity." Conſidering this remark as an axiom, the reaſon probably is, that chaſtity being the point of honor, as well as of virtue in women, it's violation has a ſtrong tendency to engraft deceit and malignity upon the ſecret conſciouſneſs of ſelf-abaſement; a conſciouſneſs more fatal to the exiſtence of other good qualities

than voluptuouſneſs itſelf; a conſciouſneſs too likely to produce hatred and envy towards people of ſpotleſs reputation, together with a deſire to reduce others to their own unfortunate level. The great Moraliſt of the Old Teſtament, ſays, "There is "no wickedneſs like the wickedneſs of a "woman;" not becauſe the weaker ſex are naturally more depraved, but from the improbability that a fallen female ſhould ever, even upon the ſincereſt repentance, regain the eſteem and confidence of ſociety, while it pardons a male libertine the inſtant he ſeems diſpoſed to forſake his vice, and too often during it's full career.

But the fault of Madam de L'Enclos was ſingle, and ſurrounded by ſolid virtues. Truth, ſincerity, diſintereſted friendſhip, economy, generoſity, and ſtrict pecuniary juſtice, marked her commerce with the world, and ſecured to her the friendſhip and countenance of the moſt eminent people

people of that epoch, both as to talents and character.

The rigid and pious Madame de Maintenon never ceaſed to be her avowed and intimate friend, as appears from a moſt intereſting dialogue which paſſed between them after Maintenon became the wife of Louis the Fourteenth. It will be found in the Memoirs of Madame de L'Enclos, which are elegantly tranſlated from the French into our language, and were publiſhed by Dodſley in 1761. It is a very brilliant and entertaining work.

After the animation of the Silene, or Catch Fly, as an enchantreſs; after that of the Amarylis, illuſtrated by a beautiful picture of a church vane in the ſetting ſun, the Ilex, or Holly, comes forward with her giant lovers, graſping their thouſand arrows. With this metamorphoſis we find involved a lovely alluſion to Needwood Foreſt, the late pride and glory of Staffordſhire, now

ſacrificing, with all it's proſtrate honors, to a popular ſcheme of apprehended utility.

Mr. Wright's pictures are here introduced as a ſimile; but it muſt be confeſſed that not the moſt diſtant ſimilitude can be traced between them and the Ilex, or Holly, which, as enchanters and giants, guard the Foreſt; but the poetic copy of theſe unalluſive landſcapes is tranſcendent.

The immenſe Kleinhovia, indigenous to the plains of Orixa, is preſented as an amazonian nymph; and as the male parts or the tree are, in nature, ſupported by the female, ſhe is pourtrayed in Herculean beauty, bearing in her arms her puny lovers, trembling beneath the conſciouſneſs of her ſuperior ſtrength. A grand picture of the Grecian Thaleſtris, appropriate to the ſubject, thus illuſtrates the transformation:

So bright Thaleſtris ſhook her plumy creſt,
And bound in rigid mail her ſwelling breaſt,

Pois'd

Pois'd her long lance amid the walks of war,
And Beauty thunder'd from Bellona's car;
Greece, arm'd in vain; her captive heroes wove
The chains of conqueſt with the wreaths of love.

The noble landſcape of the late and wintered period of Autumn, quoted in an early part of theſe Memoirs, introduces the perſonification of the Tulip. The bulbous root of flowers is termed by Linneus the *hybernacle*, or winter-lodge of the young plant. He ſays, "Each bulb contains the "leaves and flowers in miniature, which "are to be expanded in the enſuing ſpring." The ſame embryon miniatures are found in the buds of the Hepatica, the Daphne-Mezereon, and at the baſe of Oſmunda-Lunaria. The Tulip, in poetic animation, is a beautiful Matron, flying from the chill and ſtormy ſeaſon to a lone cavern. She is then preſented as ſitting in that retreat, and nurſing her infant on her boſom till warmer days ſhall come. A pretty alluſive

deſcription of the Dor-mouſe, and it's half-year's ſlumber, adorns that paſſage.

Colchicum Autumnale, or Autumnal-meadow-ſweet, aſcends amid the troubled air, with her attendant lovers. Thus eminent in beauty is the ſtellar ſimile for that flower:

> So ſhines, with ſilver guards, the Georgian ſtar,
> And drives, on Night's blue arch, his glittering car;
> Hangs o'er the billowy clouds his lucid form,
> Wades through the miſt, and dances in the ſtorm.

The Helianthus, or Sun-flower, becomes a Derviſe, and leads his devout trains to worſhip the riſing orb of day. Since the head of that majeſtic plant always, and by nutation, follows the courſe of the ſun, it properly aſſumes the name and habits of a Derviſe or Bramin. With this and the three ſucceeding metamorphoſes, in themſelves full of beauty and grace, the Droſera, or Sun-dew, the Lonicera, or Honey-ſuckle, and the Alpine Draba, ſweet traits of contraſted

traſted landſcape are blended; with Helianthus, the warm unſhadowed lawns of morning; with Droſera the moiſt, the ruſh-enwoven and moſſy ſcenes in which ſhe wantons; with Draba, the icy caves and volcanos of Tenerif, amid which ſhe builds her eyry,

> Aſpiring Draba builds her eagle neſt;

and we are told that,

> Her tall ſhadow waves o'er the diſtant land.

When we learn, from the note on this paſſage, that Draba is one of the Alpine graſſes, we wonder that ſo minute and dwarfiſh a plant ſhould become ſo vaſt, commanding, and imperial in her tranſformation. The Poet next exerciſes his Proteus art upon Viſcum, Miſletoe, which never grows upon the ground, but grafts itſelf upon the branches of trees. This aerial nymph is ſhown as an angel of air, ſeeking amongſt it's clouds her ſoaring lovers.

When Zoſtera, Graſſwrack, (which grows at the bottom of the ocean, and, riſing to it's top, covers many leagues with it's leaves,) comes forth from beneath the wand of this potent magician, we meet one of the happieſt ſallies of his ſportive pen. She is ſhown as Queen of the coral groves; her palace in the ſea, ſupported on cryſtal columns; it's turrets roofed with lucid ſhells, which dart their every-coloured rays afar into the deep; the ſhadows on it's floor, philoſophically deſcribed from the riſing and breaking of the exterior billows; the mermaid-train enweaving orient pearls in her hair; her ſhooting up to the ſurface like a meteor; aſcending the ſtrand, and ſummoning, by a loud-ſtruck ſhell, her ſea-born lovers to attend her progreſs; creative imagination, the high and peculiar province of the genuine Poet, has few more beautiful creations than this marine picture and ſcene.

That

That curious plant of the polar regions, the Barometz, from it's exterior reſemblance to a ſheep or lamb, is, by poetic magic, transformed into that animal, and to it the Whale is compared; ſurely on no other poſſible relation, than as both the odd plant and the ſea-monſter, are natives of the arctic regions. The Whale, however, makes a grand poetic picture:

> Since then, the thing itſelf is rich and rare,
> Exclaim not, "How the d—l came it there*!"

Mimoſa, Senſitive-plant, becomes a nymph of infinite delicacy. The objects aptly choſen to illuſtrate the nervous ſenſibility with which that plant recedes from the approaching hand, are thus deſcribed, and ſurely with no common happineſs:

> So ſinks, or riſes, with the changeful hour,
> The liquid ſilver in it's glaſſy tower;
> So turns the needle to the pole it loves,
> With fine vibrations quivering as it moves.

* Parody of Pope's lines on the Amber.

The

The Anemone and her modern-life objects of compariſon, by no means form one of the gems of this poem, however harmonious the lines. A lady's calaſh and a landau are out of their place in high heroic numbers. The Anemone and her trivialities, are ſublimely contraſted by the rock-born Lichen, both in ſcenery and accompliſhment. She has too much dignity from her ſurrounding landſcape to have, or to want an illuſtrative ſimile. Her habitation is on the top of Snowdon, nodding over the tumultuous river Conway; the hour midnight; the ſtars and cold moon gilding the rifted rocks; the whirlwind and dark thunder-ſtorm rolling and burſting below the ſummit of the mountain. From it's topmoſt ſtone the transformation of the Dipſaca conveys us to a valley glowing beneath the long prevalence of the dog-ſtar, when the channel of every rill is dry, and the parched earth gapes. The perſoni-

perſonification of the plant has every graceful charm of a languid beauty.

The Rubia, Madder, a plant uſed for the purpoſe of making a crimſon dye, is compared to Medea bending over her caldron, in which youth was reſtored by immerſion. It is an apt alluſion to the faded beauty, who reſtores her loſt bloom by rouge.

Valliſner, a curious aquatic plant of the Rhone, apoſtrophiſes, when, in her human form, the ſtars and moon, ſhining at midnight on the ſhores of her watery home; and the ſea-weed, Ulva, with her young family, guarded on the deep by Halcyons, ſerves to introduce the famous Galatea in her ſhelly chariot, drawn by Dolphins over the Ocean. She has more ſtate and more ſuperb attendants on her maritime progreſs, than Europa, in the ſecond Canto of the Economy of Vegetation, or than the Nereid, in the third; though in the picture of

Galatea

Galatea there is perhaps a leſs degree of originality.

But, upon the transformation of the Tremella, Star-jelly, (a fungus often found in the ſtate of tranſparent jelly, after it has been frozen in autumnal mornings,) the Poet has laviſhed ſome of the fineſt effuſions of his fancy. It is ſurely the tranſcendent paſſage of this ſecond part of Dr. Darwin's Poem. No eye has ſeen, or ever can ſee a beautiful Nymph frozen into an ice-ſtatue; but admit the poſſibility, and every circumſtance of the gradual petrification is no leſs natural than it is lovely; nor can any degree of admiration be too high for the beauty and grace of the deſcription. It is ſuperior to the Ovidian Daphne.

This Canto now prepares to cloſe; the Muſe of Botany perceives a tempeſt approaching, and ſhe is led by Wood-Nymphs into their moſt ſequeſtered bowers. They ſuſpend her lyre upon their laurel trees, and bind

bind her brow with myrtles. If ſhe had no other claim, the Tremella alone ought to give her wreath unperiſhable bloom. Symptoms of the impending ſhower are given with that accuracy with which, on every occaſion, this genuine Poet obſerved the objects of nature, thus:

Now the light ſwallow, with her airy brood,
Skims the green meadow and the dimpled flood.
Loud ſhrieks the lone thruſh on her leafleſs thorn;
Th' alarmed beetle blows his bugle horn;
Each pendant ſpider weaves, with fingers fine,
Her ravell'd clue, and climbs along the line;
Gay Gnomes, in glittering circles, ſtand aloof
Beneath a ſpreading muſhroom's ample roof;
Swift bees, returning, ſeek their waxen cells,
And Sylphs hang quivering in the lily's bells;
Through the ſtill air deſcend the genial ſhowers,
And pearly rain-drops deck the laughing flowers.

An Interlude in proſe ſucceeds to this Canto. It is a ſuppoſed dialogue between the Poet and his Bookſeller, in which the former gives us his ideas of the conſtitution

of true Poetry. His firſt ſpeech, "I am "only a flower-painter, or occaſionally "attempt a landſcape," is neither true, nor did Dr. Darwin deſire that it ſhould be conſidered as veritable.

In the courſe of this Interlude he will be found making much higher claims for himſelf, and too excluſively limiting poetry to the ſphere of pictureſque expreſſion; yet his criticiſm on this line in Pope's Windſor Foreſt is perfectly juſt,

And Kennet ſwift, for ſilver Eels renown'd.

Since, whenever objects are introduced in verſe, which, plainly mentioned, can excite no intereſt, it is queſtionleſs the Poet's duty to awaken intereſting remembrance of them by little pictureſque touches, ſuch as we find in the Doctor's ſuggeſted change of that line, to

And Kennet ſwift, where ſilver graylings play.

His ſtricture upon Burke's ſtyle in proſe,

as

as much too ornamented, has ſurely little juſtice. Eloquence can only be produced by a ſtrict union of ſtrength and ornament. The Corinthian pillar is not leſs ſtable than the Doric; not leſs firm on account of it's flowers. Dr. Darwin here ſeems to wiſh that proſe ſhould be precluded by it's plainneſs from riſing into eloquence. He wiſhed to keep proſe too plain, and his warmeſt admirers will ſurely acknowledge that he inſiſts upon poetry being dreſſed with too elaborate magnificence. We find him in this Interlude, very ingenious on the ſubject of allegoric figures, alſo on that of dreams, and in his compariſon of them to the reveries which the true Poet excites in his intelligent readers; but he is greatly indeed miſtaken when he repreſents the art of exciting ſuch rapt and abſtracted ſenſations as ſolely conſiſting in pictureſque writing. Inſtruction, pathos, all the grandeur and beauty of moral and religious ſentiment,

ſentiment, are here turned over to the proſe writer, as if they were not equally capable of giving faſcinating power to verſe, as well as to oratory. The following paſſages are not pictureſque; but no pictures ever preſented by the muſes, are more potent to impreſs, thrill, and captivate that mind which is alive to the magic influence of their art:

Some ſay, that, ever 'gainſt the ſeaſon comes
At which our Savior's birth is celebrated;
The bird of dawning ſingeth all night long;
And then, they ſay, no ſpirit walks abroad;
The nights are wholeſome; then no planets ſtrike,
No fairy takes, no witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and ſo gracious is the time!

HAMLET.

——— I fled, and cried out—Death;
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and ſigh'd
Through all her caves, and back reſounded—Death!

MILTON.

——— if prayers
Could alter high decrees, I to heaven's throne
Would ſpeed before thee, and be louder heard

That

That on my head all might be viſited,
Thy frailty and infirmer ſex forgiven,
By me committed, and by me expos'd.

MILTON.

Remember March! the ides of March remember!
Did not great Julius bleed for juſtice' ſake?
What villain touch'd his body, that did ſtab,
And not for juſtice? What! ſhall one of us,
That ſtruck the foremoſt man in all the world
But for ſupporting robbers, ſhall we now
Contaminate our fingers with baſe bribes,
And fell the mighty ſpace of our large honors
For as much traſh as may be graſped thus?
I had rather be a dog, and bay the moon,
Than ſuch a Roman.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

Plac'd on this iſthmus of a middle ſtate,
A Being darkly wiſe and rudely great;
With too much knowledge for the Sceptic ſide,
With too much weakneſs for the Stoic's pride,
He hangs between, in doubt to act or reſt,
In doubt to deem himſelf a god or beaſt;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer,
Born but to die, and reaſoning but to err;
Sole judge of truth, in endleſs error hurl'd,
The glory, jeſt, and riddle of the world.

POPE, on the Conſtruction of Man.

Not e'en a ſpot unfought the hero gave,
No! till his foes had earn'd it, not a grave!
WESLEY, of King William the Third.

Reflect, that leſſen'd fame is ne'er regain'd,
That virgin honor once is always ſtain'd!
Timely advis'd the growing danger ſhun,
Better not do the deed than weep it done!
No penance can abſolve a guilty flame,
Nor tears, that waſh out ſin, can waſh out ſhame.
HENRY AND EMMA.

Methought I heard a voice cry, Sleep no more!
Macbeth doth murder ſleep! the innocent ſleep!
Sleep, that knits up the ravell'd ſleeve of care,
The death of each day's grief, ſore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, chief nouriſher in life's feaſt!
.....
Still it cried, Sleep no more, to all the houſe,
Glamis hath murder'd ſleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall ſleep no more, Macbeth ſhall ſleep no more!

Who will call theſe paſſages proſaic? Who are they that will not confeſs them to be poetry, and ſuch poetry as requires no aid from picture to eſtabliſh it's claims? Perhaps

Perhaps Dr. Darwin would not have deemed them ſufficiently adorned, ſince all there is to the heart and nothing to the eye. To be conſiſtent with the criticiſm of this his Interlude, he muſt have aſſerted their deficiency, and thus have proved that, while his imagination was ſo richly exuberant; while ſublimity, as well as beauty, attended the commanding march of his Muſe, there was a radical defect in his poetic ſyſtem, which would for ever have incapacitated him from being a firſt-rate Epic or Dramatic writer; but as nature hovered over the cradle of Shakeſpear, and gave him her golden keys, to unlock the gates of the Paſſions, ſo did Imagination over that of Dr. Darwin, and put into his graſp her magic wand, and ſpread over his form her every-coloured robe.

SECOND CANTO.

Again the Goddeſs ſtrikes the golden lyre,
And tunes to wilder notes the warbling wire,

With ſoft, ſuſpended ſtep Attention moves,
And Silence hovers o'er the liſtening groves.

The ſecond line of the paſſage is too alliterative, and therefore palls upon the ear. Alliteration is an edge tool in the Poet's hand, improving or injuring his verſe, as it is judiciouſly or injudiciouſly uſed. Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Spenſer, Milton, and all the beſt poets, have employed it to admirable effect; and to admirable effect has Dr. Darwin frequently employed it, though not in this inſtance. It often increaſes, and ſometimes entirely conſtitutes, that power which, by a metaphoric expreſſion that literal terms would neither ſo concifely nor ſo well explain, is called *pictureſque ſound*. To increaſe the harmony of verſe, alliteration muſt be with the vowels, the liquid letter *l*, or by the ſonorous letters *m* and *n*; and even with them it's too frequent uſe in a poem, or too laviſh repetition in a ſingle line or couplet, will injure what it is deſigned

to improve, as in the above ſecond line of this ſecond Canto. Dryden, in his noble Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, has alliterated with the hiſſing *ſ*, in two lines, which he meant ſhould be peculiarly muſical; thus,

> Softly ſweet in Lydian meaſures
> Soon he ſooth'd the ſoul to pleaſures.

A foreign ear would not endure the lines, which, however lively, are certainly not tender, not harmonious; yet the *ſ*, and all the harſher conſonants, are capable of producing, by ſkilful application, that "echo of ſound to ſenſe," which is ſo eminently deſirable in poetry. When Milton obſerves in the Paradiſe Loſt,

> So talk'd the ſpirited ſly ſnake,

the line attains, ſolely by alliteration, the perfect hiſs of the ſerpent; and Pope, in his Homer, by a maſterly intermixture of the vowels and the ſonorous conſonants

with his alliteration of the letter *ſ*, has nobly conveyed to our ear the peculiar noiſe of the ocean-waves when they are loud on the beach; thus,

Silent he wander'd by the ſounding main.

The murmur of a calm ſea has been well expreſſed by the alliteration of the following line:

Slow on the damp and ſhelly ſhore ſhe ſtray'd.

There is ſomewhere a line, in which a poetaſter, mentioning the violet, ſays,

Where blue it blooms with balmy breath.

He thought he had hammered out an immenſely fine verſe, though in fact it is to the ear no whit more agreeable than,

Three blue beans in one blue bladder.

The letters *b* and *p* make miſerable alliteration. Milton has uſed the harſh letter *r*, to very fine effect in the following lines:

Vex'd

Vex'd Scylla, bathing in the ſea that parts
Calabria from the hoarſe Trinacrian ſhore.

Dr. Beattie, in his charming Minſtrel, has ſo uſed alliteration as to produce two of the moſt harmonious verſes in our language.

Young Edwin, lighted by the evening ſtar,
Lingering and liſtening, wander'd down the vale.

This digreſſion into general criticiſm will not be thought irrelevant to the peculiar theme of theſe pages, when it is conſidered that, for the preſumption of cenſuring, even in one inſtance, the eminently harmonious numbers of the Botanic Garden, it was requiſite to juſtify ſuch cenſure by examining the uſe or abuſe of that habit of ſtyle, which ſtrengthens or enfeebles, adorns or miſbecomes the verſe, as the good or bad taſte of the writer ſhall direct it's application. Churchill has ridiculed alliteration in a line of ſingular felicity, for an unworthy

purpoſe, a ſatirical paſſage on the beautiful poetry of Maſon; thus,

——— I, who never pray'd
For apt alliteration's artful aid.

But the ridicule intended for the ſweet Swan of the Humber, falls equally on the elder claſſics of Greece, Rome, and England.

The firſt transformation of this ſecond Canto is the Carline Thiſtle. We learn, from a note on the paſſage, that it's ſeeds are furniſhed with a plume, by which they are borne through the air. Carlina, in human ſhape, is repreſented as fabricating Dædalion wings for herſelf and offspring, with moſt ingeniouſly deſcribed mechaniſm, and with happier ſucceſs than thoſe of the renowned mechanic in ancient fable.

And now ſucceeds, in happy ſimilitude, a balloon-voyage, exact and accurate to the circumſtances of aerial journeying in the firſt inſtance, and ſublime in the imagi-

native

native part, the aſtronomic alluſions: they are thus given:

Riſe, great Mongolfier! urge thy venturous flight
High o'er the moon's pale, ice-reflected light;
High o'er the pearly ſtar, whoſe beamy horn
Hangs in the eaſt, gay harbinger of morn;
Leave the red eye of Mars on rapid wing,
Jove's ſilver guards, and Saturn's duſky ring;
Leave the fair beams, that, iſſuing from afar,
Play, with new luſtre, round the Georgian ſtar;
Shun, with ſtrong oars, the ſun's attractive throne,
The ſparkling zodiac, and the milky zone,
Where headlong comets, with increaſing force,
Through other ſyſtems bend their blazing courſe!
For thee Caſſiope her chair withdraws,
For thee the Bear retracts his ſhaggy paws.
High o'er the north thy golden orb ſhall roll,
And blaze eternal round the wondering pole.
So Argo, riſing from the ſouthern main,
Lights with new ſtars the blue, etherial plain;
With favoring beams the mariner protects,
And the bold courſe, which firſt it ſteer'd, directs.

So beautifully does this high prieſt of Fancy chooſe to conſtellate the firſt adventurous Aeronaut.

In

In the animation of Linum Flax we are preſented with the exacteſt-poſſible deſcription of the machinery, and the art of weaving; and in that of Goſſipiam, Cotton Plant, the late Sir Richard Arkwright's apparatus at Matlock, with the whole progreſs of it's operations, is brought diſtinctly before the eye, recalling them to thoſe by whom they have been examined, and inſtructing in their progreſs thoſe who never beheld them.

So, in the perſonification of Cyperus Papyrus, under the name of Papyra, another art, that of printing, paſſes before us with equal preciſion. The leaves of this plant were firſt uſed in Egypt for paper, and gave the name, which it retains to this day; ſo, leaf, or folium, for the fold of a book. We have here, in ſweet verſification, the whole proceſs of that ineſtimable invention, which paints thoughts, ſounds, and numbers, in myſtic and imperiſhable characters;

characters; imperiſhable, at leaſt, during the reign of Time. Yes, it was the encouragement given by that art to the ſciences, which enabled this Bard to throw over them all his ſplendid robe of deſcriptive poeſy. The venerable and celebrated Mrs. Delany, ſometime deceaſed, and her miraculous Hortus Siccus, are here introduced as a ſimile to Papyra; but deſcribing a totally different art from hers, even that of a mere artificial flower-maker, this ſimile, which bears ſo little reſemblance to writing and printing, forms one of the moſt cenſurable paſſages in the whole poem. Mrs. Delany, in her repreſentation of plants, and flowers, native and exotic, and which fill ten immenſe folio volumes, uſed neither the wax, moſs, or wire, attributed to her in this entirely falſe deſcription of her art. She employed no material but paper, which ſhe herſelf, from her knowledge of chemiſtry, was enabled to dye of all hues,

and

and in every ſhade of each; no implement but her ſciſſors, not once her pencil; yet never did painting preſent a more exact repreſentation of flowers of every colour, ſize, and cultivation, from the ſimple hedge and field-flower, to the moſt complicated foliage that Horticulture has multiplied. This lady, once Mrs. Pendarvis, the friend and correſpondent of Swift, and in her later years honored by the friendſhip and frequent viſits at Windſor, of the King, Queen, and Princeſſes, began this her aſtoniſhing ſelf-invented work at the age of ſeventy-four. The Poet here miſrepreſents her as being aſſiſted by her virgin train. She had no aſſiſtant; no hands, but her own, formed one leaf or flower of the ten volumes. Her family were mortified by a deſcription which they juſtly thought degraded her peculiar art; and remonſtrated with Dr. Darwin on the occaſion, expreſſing a wiſh that future editions might contain

tain it's more juſt picture on his poetic page. He ſaid, the deſcription in the note was accurate; but that truth in this, as in many other inſtances, being leſs favourable to poetry than fiction, he did not choſe to alter the text.

The Lepſana, the Nymphea alba, and the Calendula, whoſe flowers, as do many other flowers, open and ſhut at certain hours of the riſing and declining day, are transformed into elegant female watch-makers. Linneus calls the forty-ſix flowers of this order, the Horologe, or Watch of Flora. This transformation involves an highly poetic deſcription of the art that traces the march of Time. The progreſſive mechaniſm which completes a watch, is traced with accuracy, and, in the mention of it's ornamental trophies, we meet ſublime imagery; ſuch as Time daſhing Superſtition from it's baſe, and the Hours leading their trains around the wreck; but the

the Moments are imperſonized with too much quaint prettineſs. The whole of this imagery is an imitation, as indeed the Author afterwards acknowledges, of the following paſſage in Young's Night Thoughts,

> Each Moment has it's ſickle, emulous
> Of Time's enormous ſcythe, whoſe ample ſweep
> Strikes empires from the root; each Moment plies
> His little weapon in the narrower ſphere
> Of ſweet domeſtic comfort, and cuts down
> Our faireſt blooms of ſublunary bliſs.

The Hours leading their trains around the wrecks their parent had made, and planting amidſt them the growth of ſcience and taſte, is an original and beautiful addition in Dr. Darwin's imitative paſſage. The Moments are obnoxious to his own criticiſm in the firſt Interlude; they become unpleaſing from being too diſtinctly deſcribed, with their kiſſes and their baby hands. Perhaps the perſonified Moments are not leſs diſtinctly pourtrayed in the above

above paſſage from the Night Thoughts; but *there*, a penſive intereſting morality caſts over them a ſoftening veil; while their gayer appearance and employment on the Darwinian page, brings them into glaring, and perhaps almoſt ludicrous view.

That unpleaſing change, which takes place in the Helleborus after impregnation, produces, in it's metamorphoſis, a fair nymph, ſuddenly ſmitten by a loathſome diſtemper, which utterly deſtroys her charms. An odd compariſon enſues, the ſuppoſed actual transformation of Nebuchadnezzar into a beaſt; whereas the Scripture only ſays, that he dwelt with the beaſts of the field, and took their prone habits. His imputed change into their *ſhape* is ingeniouſly, but ſomewhat ludicrouſly painted; and we are apt to fancy the Euphrates ſlandered in theſe lines, which finely deſcribe a river of ſluggiſh and ſullied current:

Lolls his red tongue, and from the reedy ſide
Of ſlow Euphrates laps the muddy tide.

That harmonioufly-named river of the Eaſt, has too long rolled through our imagination in beautiful and lucid currents, for us to like this reverſe picture of it's ſtreams. One of our poets, probably Milton, has ſomewhere ſaid,

——— and by the verdant ſide
Of palmy Euphrates.

At laſt, ſince the ſituation of Babylon was certainly flat and marſhy, Dr. Darwin is probably correct in this inſtance, however obſtinately our ſenſations may refuſe to grant that one of the rivers which encircled Paradiſe can deſerve to be *ſo* deſcribed; but there, as it was nearer it's ſource in the mountain Niphates, it would certainly be more pure; beſides, that it may be ſuppoſed to have become polluted

by

by it's progreſs through leſs hallowed earth. The laſt line of the Nebuchadnezzar-tranſformation is burleſque, by reaſon of the epithet *pendant:*

Nor Flattery's ſelf can pierce his pendant ears.

And the alliterating *p* makes the ſound of the line diſpleaſing as is the image it conveys.

The Meniſpernum, Indian-berry, which intoxicates fiſh, being of the claſs two females, twelve males, here aſſumes the form of two Siſter Nymphs, ſcattering their inebriating berries on the waters. The Popiſh legend of St. Anthony preaching to the fiſh, and converting them to Chriſtianity, forms the whimſical and not very pleaſing illuſtration. It's language violates the third commandment deplorably.

The Papaver, Poppy, becomes a drowſy Enchantreſs of malignant operation; but

her somniferous palace is described in these lovely numbers:

> Sopha'd on silk, amid her charm-built towers,
> Her meads of asphodel, and amaranth bowers,
> Where Sleep and Silence guard the soft abodes,
> In sullen apathy, Papaver nods.
> Faint o'er her couch, in scintillating streams,
> Pass the light forms of Fancy and of Dreams.

Her enchantments are poetically given from old Tales of the Genii, and she is compared to Hermes driving the Ghosts to the shores of Erebus; and again *his* employment to the drawings of Miss Emma Crew, a compliment of very forced introduction.

The Cistus, a plant whose transient, but plenteous flowers expand in succession on the first warmth of May, becomes a Nymph, who calls her train to choir the birth of that month. She is obeyed, and a very exquisite song ensues, in which the altered measure relieves the ear. Without any

any perceivable chain of thought, the ſudden death of the fair Ciſta, ſerves to uſher in a fine picture of an hoar-froſt landſcape, diſſolving inſtantaneouſly beneath a change of keen to ſoft wind, accompanied by the emerging ſun.

Cinchona, Peruvian bark tree, paſſes before us as a Peruvian Maid, on her way to the altar, which, in Quito, ſhe had raiſed to the goddeſs Hygeia, and of which ſhe is the adminiſtrant prieſteſs. Her progreſs thither, and her ceremonies at the ſhrine, and her prayer to the Goddeſs, are beautiful; the perſonified Diſeaſes ſublime, particularly Ague. The accidental manner, in which, it is well known, the medicinal virtues of the bark were firſt diſcovered, is here conveyed to the reader with the happieſt ingenuity, as a dictate of Hygeia to her Prieſteſs, in anſwer to the prayer. Cinchona is commanded to yield her ſacred foreſts to the axe, and to ſtrew their

bitter foliage on the rivers. She obeys; her lovers fell the trees, and impregnate the waters with the leaves, while pale infected squadrons kneel on the margin, and health and bloom return as they drink. All this forms a complete and charming little drama. It needed no illustration, but it has a very serious one, that of Moses in the Wilderness, striking the rock, "so that "the waters flowed out."

To the bark-metamorphosis succeeds that of the Digitalis, Fox-glove, of whose now experienced, though not infallible virtue, in dropsical cases, Dr. Darwin claims the first discovery. The bloated and cadaverous form of Dropsy appears, and his unquenchable thirst is compared to that of Tantalus in these four admirable lines:

So bends tormented Tantalus to drink,
While from his lips the refluent waters shrink;
Again the rising stream his bosom laves,
And thirst consumes him 'mid circumfluent waves.

Hygeia

Hygeia aſſumes the form of Digitalis; waves over the diſeaſed her ſerpent-wreathed wand, "and charms the ſhapeleſs monſter "into man."

To her is compared the good Biſhop of Marſeilles, when the plague raged in that city; alſo the generous and active Mayor of London, when London was under ſimilar viſitation. From him the Poet ſlides into a moſt animated contemplation of the great Howard's virtue, and aſſerts that the rays of philantrophy

. . . . . .

Dart round the globe from Zembla to the Line;
O'er each dark priſon plays the cheering light,
As northern luſtres o'er the vault of night;
From realm to realm, by croſs or creſcent crown'd,
Where'er mankind and miſery are found,
O'er burning ſands, deep waves, or wilds of ſnow,
Thy Howard, journeying, ſeeks the houſe of woe;
Down many a winding ſtep to dungeons dank,
Where anguiſh wails, and galling fetters clank;
To caves beſtrew'd with many a mouldering bone,
And cells, whoſe echoes only learn to groan;
Where no kind bars a whiſpering friend diſcloſe,
No ſun-beam enters, and no zephyr blows,

He treads inemulous of fame or wealth,
Profuſe of toil, and prodigal of health;
With ſoft perſuaſive eloquence expands
Power's rigid heart, and opes his clenching hands;
Leads ſtern-ey'd Juſtice to the dark domains,
If not to ſever, to relax the chains;
Or guides awaken'd Mercy through the gloom,
And ſhows the priſon ſiſter to the tomb;
Gives to her babes the ſelf-devoted wife,
To her fond huſband, liberty and life!

The ſpirits of the good, who bend from high,
Wide o'er theſe earthly ſcenes, their partial eye,
When firſt, array'd in Virtue's pureſt robe,
They ſaw her Howard traverſing the globe;
Saw round his brow the ſun-bright glory blaze
In arrowy circles of unwearied rays,
Miſtook a mortal for an angel gueſt,
And aſk'd what ſeraph-foot the earth impreſt.
Onward he moves, Diſeaſe and Death retire,
And murmuring Demons hate him, and admire.

If praiſe for a ſingle verbal beauty may not degrade the exalted merit of the above quotation, the biographer would obſerve that it's word *inemulous* has a ſweet effect, and that, ſhe believes, it is there in firſt coinage.

coinage. *Unambitious*, the word in common uſe for that meaning, is comparatively hard and cumbrous in verſe.

This citation conſtitutes far the ſublimeſt eulogy by which Poetry has immortalized the matchleſs Howard, Mr. Hayley's noble Ode alone excepted. That was the earlieſt tribute to his high worth, and it is admirable in a degree which only Darwin has equalled, and which perhaps no Poet can excel.

The Gnomes now ſuſpend the again ſilent lyre on the ſhrine of Hygeia; the Sylphs ſlacken the ſtrings, and catch the rain-drops on their ſhadowy pinions, while a Naiad prepares the tea-urn. The laſt Canto cloſed with a ſhower. That it ſhould rain alſo in the termination of this, is a ſameneſs which ſurpriſes us from an imagination ſo various. Then ſurely there is too ſtrong a contraſt between the ſolemn and dignified praiſe of Howard, immedi-

ately preceding; and the light and frolic idea which places a Muſe, the recent Hiſtorian of virtue ſo truly great, at the tea-table! It is out of keeping, as the painters ſay.

We meet ingenious and juſt criticiſm in the Interlude to this ſecond Canto. Aware of the frequent want of evident reſemblance between his ſubjects and their ſimilies, Dr. Darwin ſhelters himſelf under the authority of Homer, which perhaps will not entirely ſecure his practice from cenſure; ſince, if Homer's ſimilies do not often touch the object with which they are compared, at all points, yet are they never ſo utterly without connexion with it, as ſeveral which may be found in this poem. That a poetic ſimile ſhould not be preciſe in it's reſemblance is certain, at leaſt that it is the more ſublime, or more beautiful, for not quadrating exactly; yet it ought to poſſeſs ſuch a degree of affinity with the ſubject,

ſubject, that when the theme and it's illuſtration are viewed together, we may feel, though we cannot verbally demonſtrate the perfect juſtneſs of the ſimilitude.

Thus, in general, are the ſimilies of Homer conſtructed, and thus Milton's, ſeveral of which, in the Paradiſe Loſt, are grander than moſt of thoſe in the Iliad and Odyſſey. A deceaſed modern Poet has given one of extreme beauty, which, from it's aptneſs without preciſion, bears exactly that relation to the object it illuſtrates which a poetic ſimile ought to bear. There is no obvious connexion between our idea of youthful beauty, paled and ſhadowed over by death, and a vernal day-ſpring, which riſes cold and rainy:

> Her face was like an April morn
> Clad in a wintry cloud:

yet when Poetry connects them, we are immediately ſenſible of their intereſting affinity.

affinity. Death itſelf cannot at firſt conceal, however it may ſhroud the traits of youth, and of what once was lovelineſs; neither can the dull ſky and nipping wind prevent our perceiving the youth of the year, when April has put forth her freſh graſs and verdant ſprays.

In the courſe of Dr. Darwin's ſecond Interlude, there is fine diſcrimination between the tragic and the diſguſtingly horrid; and his cenſure of the painters for their frequent choice of diſagreeable ſubjects for their pencil, ſuch as torture and carnage, is perfectly juſt.

THIRD CANTO.

From the penſive graces of this exordium reſult extended ground of cenſure for the undignified ſituation of the Muſe at the cloſe of the ſecond Canto; ſince her modern Tea-table is here converted into a graſſy throne, bedewed with tears, around which

which float the thin forms of Sorrows and Apprehenſions, of Sighs whiſpering to the chords of her lyre, and Indignations, half unſheathing their ſwords. Theſe ſame *Indignations* are new allegoric perſonages, and may be of dubious welcome. The Paſſions, with *ſwords* by their ſides, form imagery which is liable to give a ludicrous impreſſion; yet we ſhould remember, that Milton puts a ſword into the hand of the archangel, Michael, in the 6th book of the Paradiſe Loſt, and Pope into that of a Ghoſt in his Elegy to the Memory of an unfortunate Lady; but Milton gives the weapon dignity by inveſting it with flames, on the authority of Scripture, and Pope ſoftens off the literality by it's imputed indiſtinctneſs, and by the epithet *viſionary*. "Why dimly gleams the viſionary ſword?"

Circea, Enchanter's Nightſhade, is the firſt transformation in this Canto. We learn from the note to the paſſage, that

it

it grows among the mouldering bones and decayed coffins of Sleaford Church, Licolnſhire, and that it was celebrated in the myſteries of witcheraft, and for the purpoſe of raiſing the devil.

As the Tremella is the moſt beautiful, ſo is Circea the ſublimeſt transformation of the four Cantos. Her marriage with the two Fiends; it's portentous ſigns which precede the ſatanic nuptials; the ſcreaming bats, the owls, and the dog of midnight howling the epithalamium; the burſting ground; the aſcending Demons; their progreſs with the grim Bride to the violated temple; thoſe ſhapeleſs ſpectres, which, by glimpſes of the moon through the coloured glaſs, are ſeen to quiver on the walls, as Circea and her horrid bridegrooms paſs along the ailes, that diſmally echo their ſteps; the unbleſſed wine with which they pollute the chalice; their hideous laugh

which

which diſturbs the ſilence of the choir; and the impious mummery of the nuptial rites; all theſe circumſtances were conceived, and are expreſſed with prodigious ſtrength of fancy.

The Laura-ceraſus, twenty males, one female, appears next, as the Pythian prieſteſs* delivering her oracles. This is her grand portrait:

Avaunt ye vulgar! from her ſacred groves,
With maniac ſtep, the Pythian Laura moves;
Full of the God her labouring boſom ſighs,
Foam on her lips, and fury in her eyes,
Strong writhe her limbs; her wild diſhevell'd hair
Starts from her laurel wreath, and ſwims in air,
While twenty prieſts the gorgeous ſhrine furround,
Cinctur'd with ephods and with garlands crown'd,
Contending hoſts, and trembling nations wait
The firm immutable beheſts of fate;
She ſpeaks in thunder from her golden throne,
With words unwill'd, and wiſdom not her own.

* The Pythian prieſteſs is ſuppoſed to have been made drunk with the infuſion of laurel leaves, when ſhe delivered her oracles. The intoxication, or inſpiration, is finely deſcribed by Virgil.

To the Pythian Laura is compared the diſtreſs of a beautiful nymph in ſlumber, beneath the influence of the night-mare. It is a poetic picture after Fuſeli. The ſquab and grinning Fiend, as he ſits on the boſom of the ſleeping Maid, and his moon-eyed mare, looking in through the bed-curtains, are pictures of ludicrous horror. They are drawn with rival ſtrength by the Poet and Painter; and are contraſted by the lovely form of the agitated ſlumberer; but the *ſucceſſion* of her convulſive appearances which the Poet brings to the eye, affords another inſtance of the ſuperior power of the pen to that of the pencil, when each are directed by the impulſe of true genius.

The perſonification of the Indian fig-tree is made a vehicle of introduction for the ſcenery of Dovedale and Ilam, the cave of Thor, the Saxon God, and all the ſanguinary ſublimities of his druidical rites.

The

The only connexion between the ſubject and it's illuſtration is, that "each branch "of the large fig-tree of India, emits a "ſlender, flexile, depending appendage "from it's ſummit, like a cord, and which "roots into the earth, and riſes again; "and the Hamps and Manifold, rivers of "the Dovedale vicinity, in their courſe "over a romantic moor, ſink ſuddenly "into the earth, and riſe again in Ilam "gardens, after their ſubterranean paſſage "of three miles."

Impatiens, Touch-me-not, from the peculiar nature of the plant, and the elaſtic motion by which it throws it's ſeeds to a great diſtance, has, in it's transformation, ſufficient affinity to the ſtory of Medea, here introduced as it's ſimile. Nowhere is that ſtriking poetic legend ſo finely told. The paſſions of jealouſy and deſpair, excited by the mercenary ingratitude of Jaſon, are here painted in their ſtrongeſt colours, riſing

riſing in power and force, till the dire filiacide cloſes the epiſode.

Thoſe electrical properties of the Dictamnus, Fraxinella, aſſerted by Dr. Darwin as having witneſſed them in the ſtill ſummer nights after long draught, induces him to transform her alſo into an enchantreſs, and the hour and ſeaſon in which ſhe celebrates her magical rites, is thus ſweetly ſpecified:

> What time the Eve her gauze pellucid ſpreads
> O'er the dim flowers, and veils the miſty meads,
> Slow o'er the twilight ſands and leafy walks,
> In gloomy dignity, Dictamna ſtalks.

The deleterious tree, the Mancinella; the Urtica, Engliſh nettle, and the Lobelia longiflora, a deadly plant of the Weſt Indies, form a continuation of Enchantreſſes, and their metamorphoſe is attended by ſtill darker traits of demoniſm. As the firſt and laſt of theſe three vegetables have life-deſtroying properties, and the Engliſh nettle only inflicts a ſlight and tranſient pain, ſhe ought

ought not to have appeared in ſuch company. Her comparative inſignificance is that of a waſp between a cobracapella and a rattle-ſnake. The ruins of Palmira are deſcribed as a ſimile to the miſchiefs of the four preceding witches, but why or wherefore defies all poetic gueſs; however, the fault of utter inconnection is atoned by the grandeur of this ſombre picture.

To that ſucceeds the embrutality of the Upas Tree, now ſuppoſed to be of fabulous exiſtence. It is preceded by a beautiful landſcape of the Iſle of Java, in the centre of which this dreadful tree was aſſerted to have ſtood. The ſeas of glaſs, the noble rocks, the ever-ſummered gales, and the ſylvan graces which zone that large iſland, form an exquiſite contraſt in this paſſage, to the deſolation round the Hydra Tree of Death, as it's author ſublimely calls it. The Upas Tree becomes a terrific monſter under the wand of our potent magician. The

enormous dragon is grand, with his unnumbered heads extending over ten ſquare leagues, and with many infant ſerpents growing out of him, like thoſe of Sin in the Paradiſe Loſt; a dragon, that

Looks o'er the clouds, and hiſſes in the ſtorm.

Into a monſter the Upas muſt be made. This Poet's ſyſtem of vegetable animality would not permit it to remain in that ſo much more impreſſive though quieter horror, with which it is deſcribed in the Dutch ſurgeon's narrative. A lonely tree by the ſide of a rivulet, in a barren and ſtony valley, circled round by vaſt and ſterile mountains; no tree but itſelf! no hedge! no blade of graſs! no wing of bird! nothing that breathes to diſturb the dreadful ſilence! dead bodies ſcattered about the waſte in every various ſtage of putridity; and the tree itſelf exhaling a viſible and poiſonous vapor, inſtantly fatal to every living

living thing which breathes the air it taints within a diameter of fifteen miles! what furious dragon, even from the pen of Dr. Darwin, but loſes it's terrors before this ſtill, this ghaſtly deſolation!

The proſe narration, taken from the London Magazine, is inſerted in the cloſe of the additional notes to the Loves of the Plants. It has ſuch an air of ſimple veracity, that we do violence to our feelings when, on reflection, we refuſe to give it credit. The gum of this tree is there aſſerted to be of high price, and uſed to envenom the Indian arrows; that it is procured by Criminals under ſentence of death, who redeem their lives if they can bring from the Upas a box of it's gum; an experiment of immenſe hazard, ſince the poſſibility of returning depends upon the perpetually veering winds blowing a ſteady gale towards the tree as the delinquent approaches it, in a progreſs of at

leaſt fifteen miles. The ſeldomneſs with which that happens, and the frequency of the attempt, ſtrew the circumjacent plains with the dead. Faith in this wonderful tale has melted away in ſubſequent inquiry. Many have ſaid that Dr. Darwin certainly believed the account. He certainly *writes* as if he believed it; yet that was but to ſerve a poetic purpoſe; credulity was not one of his propenſities.

The Orchis Morio, the parent root of which ſhrivels up and dies as the young one increaſes, is transformed into a fond mother, nurſing her infant at the expence of her own health and life. This animation is ſhort, and, compared to many of the others, has little intereſt; but it's two illuſtrations have every intereſt, and the ſecond forms a very ſweet and mournful epiſode. The firſt is a lovely picture of a wounded deer, eſcaping from her ambuſhed archer, and flying, with her fawn, to the woodlands,

woodlands, over plains ſpotted with her blood; and, amid thick ſhades, hanging over her young, and weeping her life away. Then, in ſucceſſive ſimile, comes the thrice intereſting ſtory. An Officer's Wife with her infants, watching, from a near hill, the battle of Minden, in which her huſband was engaged, is mortally wounded by a random ſhot. We find this incident related with ſo much pathos as almoſt to diſſipate the apprehenſion, that Dr. Darwin's rage for the pictureſque would, in a ſubject of genuine intereſt for the human paſſions, have proved deſtructive to his powers of awakening them. The mournful truth of one line in this epiſode ought to ſink deep in every human heart, viz.

The angel Pity ſhuns the walks of War.

Truly honourable is it to the Poets of this reign, that the beſt of them have never ſtimulated, but, on the contrary, have

endeavoured to meliorate and abate that belligerent ſpirit, always injurious to the true intereſt of this country, and fruitful in the extreme of human miſery. A ſpirit, by which Britain looks over the Atlantic, ſhorn of her continental beams; a ſpirit, to whoſe unwarned and perſiſting violence in later years, the lives of the ſoldiery, and the comforts of millions of families, were laviſhed in defiance of the Goſpel, which preaches peace on earth, and good-will towards men.

But to return to the epiſode; the liſping boy, on his father's approach.

Speak low, he cries, and gives his little hand;
Eliza ſleeps upon the dew-cold ſand;
Poor weeping babe, with bloody fingers preſs'd,
And tried, with pouting lips, the milkleſs breaſt.
Alas! we both with cold and hunger quake,
Why do you weep? Mamma will ſoon awake!
She'll wake no more! the hapleſs mourner ſaid!

Nothing can be more natural and more affecting than the ideas in this ſpeech of the

the child, only that *dew-cold* and *milkleſs* are not infantine expreſſions.

The Cuſcuta, Dodder, four males two females. It does not root itſelf in the earth, but aſcends the vegetables in it's neighbourhood, and ultimately deſtroys the plant on which it had grown to maturity. In this ſyſtem of animality it is repreſented as two treacherous coquets, ſmiling to betray; and, from the circumſtance of the plant twining round the ſhrub or tree, which it finally kills, the ungrateful beauties are compared to the ſerpents, which ſtrangled Laocoon and his ſons. That ſtory here forms a faithful poetic picture of the celebrated ſtatue.

In the transformation of the Vine into a Bacchanalian Female, the Doctor introduces, and enforces his juſt and favorite ſyſtem, of conſidering the free uſe of vinous fluid, in all it's ſtages, as the ſource of our moſt fatal chronic diſeaſes. They are very

poetically imperſoniſed as they hover round the ſeductive nymph, Vitis, while Chemia mingles poiſon in her bowl. This fell group is admirably illuſtrated by an image of Prometheus chained to a rock, with a vulture devouring his liver. The many diſorders of the liver, ſo torturing and ſo fatal, which ebriety cauſes, are nobly allegorized in this fable of him, who is repreſented as being thus puniſhed for having ſtolen fire from heaven. Dr. Darwin's note to this paſſages deſerves to be engraven on every man's memory, ſince it is the atteſtation of a great Phyſician, founded on an extenſive practice of nearly half a century.

The Cyclamen, Shewbread or Sowbread, which, " when it's ſeeds are ripe, gradually " twiſts it's ſtalk ſpirally downward, till it " touches the earth, and there inſerts it's " offspring," is changed into a tender matron, reſigning her departed infants to the

the grave, and breathing a pious hope of their reſurrection. The ſimile on this occaſion is perhaps the ſublimeſt paſſage in the whole work; it's real, and, in former ages, often exiſting horrors, tranſcend in ſtrength all Imagination has formed, or can form, with her train of ſpectres, witches, and demons:

So when the Plague, o'er London's gaſping crowds,
Shook her dank wing, and ſteer'd her murky clouds;
When o'er the friendleſs bier no rites were read,
No dirge ſlow chanted, and no pall outſpread;
While Death and Night pil'd up the naked throng,
And Silence drove their ebon cars along,
Six * lovely daughters, and their father, ſwept
To the throng'd grave, Cleone ſaw, and wept.
Her tender mind, with meek religion fraught,
Drank, all-reſign'd, Affliction's bitter draught;

* During the laſt great plague in London, one pit, to receive the dead, was dug in the Charter Houſe, forty feet long, ſixteen feet wide, and twenty feet deep, and in two weeks received 1114 bodies. During this dire calamity there were inſtances of mothers carrying their own children to thoſe public graves; and of people delirious, or in deſpair for the loſs of friends, who threw themſelves alive into theſe pits. See Journal of the Plague in 1665, printed for E. Nutt, Royal Exchange.

Alive,

Alive, and liſtening to the whiſper'd groan
Of other's woes, unmindful of her own.
One ſmiling boy, her laſt ſweet hope, ſhe warms,
Huſh'd on her boſom, cradled in her arms.
Daughter of woe! ere morn, in vain careſs'd,
Clung the cold babe upon thy milkleſs breaſt;
With feeble cries thy laſt ſad aid requir'd,
Stretch'd it's ſtiff limbs, and on thy lap expir'd!
Long, with wide eye-lids, on her child ſhe gaz'd,
And long to heav'n their tearleſs orbs ſhe rais'd;
Then, with quick foot and throbbing heart, ſhe found
Where Chartreuſe open'd deep his holy ground;
Bore her laſt treaſure through the midnight gloom,
And kneeling dropp'd it in the mighty tomb.
"I follow next!" the frantic mourner ſaid,
And living plung'd amid the feſtering dead.

It appears to the author of this memoir, that, in the above ſolemn, great, and impreſſive epiſode, only two words, an epithet and it's ſubſtantive, "ebon cars," could be changed to advantage. Ebony has a gloſſy and poliſhed black, and is therefore of unſuitable reſemblance to that vehicle of horror. Then amid the dreadful truths of the deſcription,

deſcription, the dead cart ſhould have been called by it's ſimple name; *car*, has a fine triumphant ſound, which ſomewhat diſturbs the awful horror of the impreſſion. Surely the vehicle without nominal alteration, and with a ſtronger epithet prefixed, that ſhould not ſpecify it's complexion, would be better,

> While Death and Night pil'd up the naked throng,
> And Silence drove their ghaſtly carts along.

From the banks of the Ontario we have the Caſſia. It is one of thoſe American fruits which are annually thrown on the coaſt of Norway, in wonderful emigration. Dr. Darwin accounts for it by a ſuppoſed exiſtence of under currents in the depth of the ocean, or from vortexes of water paſſing from one country to another through caverns of the earth. The Caſſia, ten males one female, is repreſented as a fair American matron, who, alarmed by the riſing

riſing tempeſt, truſts her children to the floods. The Scripture tradition of Moſes, committed to the Nile by his Hebrew mother, is here told with aptneſs to the ſubject, with pictureſque beauty, and with pathetic ſweetneſs. This child, reſcued from the flood, and riſing into an ambaſſador of Heaven, a mighty Prophet, that wreſted the ſcourge from the oppreſſor's hand, and broke the iron bonds of his nation's ſlavery, nobly and religiouſly cloſes the paſſage; and in that cloſe awfully contraſts the tenderneſs of the opening. From thence the Poet paſſes into another ſublime philippic on the plague-ſpot in the moral and religious health of Britain, her cruel Slave Trade, and makes this ſtriking appeal to our ſenators;

E'en now, e'en now, on yonder weſtern ſhores,
Weeps pale Deſpair, and writhing Anguiſh roars:
E'en now in Afric's groves, with hideous yell,
Fierce Slavery ſtalks, and ſlips the dogs of hell;

From

From vale to vale the gathering cries rebound,
And ſable nations tremble at the ſound!

Ye bands of ſenators, whoſe ſuffrage ſways
Britannia's realms; whom either Ind obeys;
Who right the injur'd, and reward the brave,
Stretch your ſtrong arm, for ye have power to ſave!
Thron'd in the vaulted heart, his dread reſort,
Inexorable Conſcience holds his court;
With ſtill ſmall voice the plots of guilt alarms,
Bears his maſk'd brow, his lifted hands diſarms;
But wrapp'd in night, with terrors all his own,
He ſpeaks in thunder when the deed is done.
Hear him, ye ſenates! hear this truth ſublime,
He who allows oppreſſion, ſhares the crime.

No radiant pearl, which creſted Fortune wears,
No gem, that ſparkling hangs from Beauty's ears;
Not the bright ſtars which night's blue arch adorn;
Not riſing ſuns that gild the vernal morn,
Shine with ſuch luſtre as the tear, that breaks,
For other's woe, down Virtue's manly cheeks.

So admirably does this Bard drop the curtain of moral truth and humanity over the tiſſues of his fancy, in this the grandeſt of his ſecond-part Cantos.

The Muſe of Botany now retires with much

much more ſerious grace from her choir than ſhe had done in the preceding Cantos, and it becomes her well, from the more ſombre nature of it's recent themes.

Alike ingenious and juſt are the critical obſervations with which this third Interlude commences; they are on the relation between the arts of Poetry and Painting. In the *progreſs* of it's ſtrictures Dr. Darwin has not ſucceeded ſo well. When he would eſtabliſh affinity between the meaſures of metrical and muſical compoſition, it was owing to his total want of knowledge in muſical ſcience that he is viſionary, abſtruſe, and incomprehenſible. The inſtances he gives of fancied triple and common time in our verſe, by no means ſupport his theory, after all the pains which can be taken to comprehend it by thoſe who underſtand both the arts. His ſuggeſted poſſibility of luminous harmony, accordant to that which is vocal, ſeems metaphyſical

in

in as wild extreme as the ſuppoſed analogy between the meaſures of poetry, and the time of muſic, had been unſucceſsfully mathematical.

A pleaſing inſtance of paternal eulogy occurs in this Interlude concerning the ingenious diſcovery on the harmony of colours, by Dr. Darwin of Shrewſbury. The demonſtrated exiſtence of that harmony gives, as our Poet juſtly obſerves, Muſic and Painting undoubted right to borrow metaphors from each other; "Muſicians, "to ſpeak of the brilliancy of ſounds, and "the light and ſhade of a concerto; and "Painters, of the harmony of colours and "the tone of a picture;" but, when he ſeeks to extend in our ſenſorium theſe real affinities between the nature of colours and of muſical ſounds, into an equal relationſhip between the poetical and the muſical meaſures, he becomes incomprehenſible to thoſe who know the nature of each

each too well to believe it poſſible that the mechanical diviſions of muſical time have their correſponding rules in the formation of Engliſh verſe, whether blank or in rhyme. Perhaps the ſyſtem may, as he aſſerts, extend to the poſſibility of ſetting pictures, as well as verbal expreſſions, to muſic, but not, ſurely, as Dr. Darwin ſuppoſes, with better effect than when muſic is adapted to the ſentiments or the imagery of verſe. The love of novelty only could have induced ſuch a preference. It is conceivable that a picture, whether hiſtoric or ſcenic, might be exhibited while ſuch harmonic ſtrains are played by a band, as ſhould well expreſs the paſſions and feelings of the hiſtoric group before us, or the particular character of the landſcape; but as the picture has only it's moment, ſo muſt the correſponding melody and harmony of inſtruments have only one ſtrain; no ſucceſſive and contraſted movements.

Poetry

Poetry and Muſic are both progreſſive, Painting is ſtationary, therefore the natural union is between the two firſt; and pictures can be worth nothing to the muſician in his imitative art, in compariſon with poetry, whoſe paſſions and ſcenes are changeful, often contraſted, and always proceeding.

Again, the poetic Critic emerges into truth and day-light, when he compares the nature and privileges of the Greek and Latin languages with thoſe of our own. Silent about the tones of each, where ſuperiority is univerſally confeſſed to be with the two former, he proves that the conſtitution of the Engliſh language is, from it's power of more variouſly compounding it's terms, and from it's greater facility in producing perſonifications, better calculated for poetry than the Greek and Latin. Accordingly our poetry has more imagery than that of either of thoſe languages. From this compariſon the author ſlides into the

subject of plagiarism from the Ancients, and from former Bards of this nation. He distinguishes well what is, and what is not amenable to that cenſure, and acknowledges the few paſſages of borrowed ideas in the three preceding Cantos. He ſays, "Where the ſentiment and expreſſion are "taken from other writers without due "acknowledgment, an author is guilty of "plagiariſm, but not on the teſtimony of "ſingle words and caſual phraſes;" and adds, "they are lawful game, wild by "nature, the property of all who can "capture them. Perhaps a few common "flowers of ſpeech may be gathered as "we paſs over our neighbour's ground, "but we muſt not plunder his cultivated "fruit." Dr. Darwin forgot that juſt reſtraint when he took, unacknowledged, forty-ſix entire lines, the publiſhed verſes of his friend, for the exordium of the firſt part of his work. That extraordinary, and

in

in a Poet of so much genius, unprecedented instance of plagiarism excepted, not one great Poet of England is more original than Darwin. His design, his ideas, his style, his manner, are wholly his own.

"Bright forms that glitter in the Muse's ray,
"With orient hues, unborrow'd of the sun."

FOURTH CANTO

Opens with a sun-rise and a rain-bow, each of Homeric excellence. The Muse of Botany gazes enchanted on the scene, and swells the song of Paphos to softer chords. Her Poet adds:

Long aisles of oak return'd the silver sound,
And amorous Echoes talk'd along the ground.

This is almost verbatim from Pope's line,

And more than Echoes talk along the walls.

Plagiarism is atoned when it improves upon it's original, and that is always to be

expected from genius rich as Dr. Darwin's; but in the present instance we are disappointed. This generally so very accurate describer, here indolently sacrifices the verisimilitude of the circumstance, rather than change his rhymes. Echoes talk in the air and along walls, but we never hear their voice at our feet. They are there in double inaccuracy, since if the oaken vistas returned the sound, that sound is echo; so we have first a literal echo, and, immediately after, a plurality of personified echoes creeping on all four, and telling their imitative tales where no "Nymph of the airy "cell," as Milton beautifully terms the echo, ever deigned even to whisper.

Suppose,

> Long ailes of oak the silver sounds retain,
> And all their echoes breath'd the amorous strain.

Dr. Darwin proceeds to recall his readers to the local situation of his Muse:

Pleas'd

Pleas'd Lichfield liften'd from her ſacred bowers,
Bow'd her tall groves, and ſhook her ſtately towers.

The firſt transformation of this Canto is the Cereus grandiflora, of Jamaica, twenty males one female. It flowers and becomes odoriferous during a few hours in the night, and then cloſes to open no more. The Cerea becomes a Maid of Night, contemplating it's "ſtellar ſuns:" and ſhe is compared to the Fairy Queen of Mr. Mundy's Poem, Needwood Foreſt, in a lovely ſtrain, deſcriptive of the Elfin Sovereign. Of ſuch a pleaſing perſonage a ſecond portrait is welcome. The reader may be gratified by comparing on this page the pictures of Titania from two Poets of whom Staffordſhire may be proud.

NEEDWOOD FOREST.

Hark the ſoft lute! along the green
Moves, with majeſtic ſtep, the Queen.

Attendant Fays around her throng,
And trace the dance, or raiſe the ſong;
Or touch the ſhrill reed as they trip,
With finger light and ruby lip.

High on her brow ſublime is borne
One ſcarlet woodbine's tremulous horn;
A gaudy bee-bird's ample plume
Sheds o'er her neck it's wavy gloom;
With ſilvery goſſamer entwin'd,
Streams the luxuriant locks behind.
Thin folds of tangled net-work break,
In airy waves adown her neck;
Warp'd in his loom, the ſpider ſpread
The far diverging rays of thread.
One roſe-leaf forms her crimſon veſt,
The looſe edge croſſes o'er her breaſt,
And one tranſlucent fold, which fell
From a tall lily's ample bell,
Forms, with ſweet grace, her ſnowy train,
Flows, as ſhe ſteps, and ſweeps the plain.
Silence and Night enchanted gaze,
And Heſper hides his vanquiſh'd rays.

BOTANIC GARDEN.

Thus, when old Needwood's hoary ſcenes the Night
Paints with blue ſhadow, and with milky light;
Where Mundy pour'd, the liſtening nymphs among,
Loud to the echoing vales his parting ſong,

With

With measur'd step the Fairy Sovereign treads,
Shakes her high plume, and glitters o'er the meads;
Round each green holly leads her sportive train,
And little footsteps mark the circled plain;
Each haunted hill with silver voices rings,
And Night's sweet bird in livelier accent sings.

The next floral animation, the Tropæolum Majus, Garden Nasturtion, eight males one female, is introduced by these lovely lines:

But the bright Star which leads the morning sky
Hangs o'er the milky East it's diamond eye,
The chaste Tropæo leaves her ledrea bed;
A faint-like glory trembles round her head;

alluding to the "electric flashes, which "Miss E. C. Linneus first observed about "this flower in a summer morning, before "sun-rise." A plenty and pomp of illustration is allotted to this flower; first the fire-fly of the tropics; next the ignis-fatuus, which Dr. Darwin had deemed fabulous; and last the intrepid Youths of Judea, con-

demned by Nebuchadnezzar to the burning fiery furnace.

With ſublime ſimplicity has the Prophet Daniel told that ſtory. Beneath every remembrance in favor of the inſpired hiſtorian, we are here impreſſed and charmed anew by grandeur of imagery and picture, ſuited to the miraculous greatneſs of the ſcene. We again behold the blazing deluge, the fiery cavern, white with ſevenfold heat; the three Heroes in the midſt:

> And now a fourth, with Seraph-beauty bright,
> Deſcends; accoſts them; and outſhines the light.
> Fierce flames innocuous, as they ſtep, retire,
> And ſlow they move amid a world of fire!

How beautiful is the latter part of the ſecond line!

The Avena, Oat, three males two females, becomes a pair of muſical nymphs, alluding to the oaten pipes of early times, perhaps the firſt invented inſtrument of the harmonious

harmonious ſcience. The ſiſter Avenas ſing a lovely paſtoral ballad, whoſe ſhorter meaſure again, as twice before, in the courſe of this poem, agreeably relieves the ear.

Cannabis, Chineſe Hemp, is introduced by this fine appropriate landſcape, where China,

O'er deſert ſands, deep gulphs, and hills sublime
Extends her maſſy wall from clime to clime;
With bells and dragons creſts her Pagod-bowers,
Her ſilken palaces, and porcelain towers;
With long canals a thouſand nations laves,
Plants all her wilds, and peoples all her waves;
Slow treads fair Cannabis the breezy ſtrand,
The diſtaff ſtreams diſhevell'd in her hand.

The female form is always attractive from the poetic pencil of Darwin. Even the homely diſtaff becomes elegant, as in the hand of a fair Nymph, it's flax is buoyant on the gales of morning. Cannabis proceeds in her ſpinning, and the Graces hover around her wheel; yet to her is "ſtern Clotho" compared, who weaves the

the web of Human Deſtiny, "the cradle "and the coffin binding it's ends;" but the Lady is here in her kindeſt mood, auſpicious Fortune turning the giddy wheel:

But if ſweet Love, with baby-fingers, twines,
And wets, with dewy lips, the lengthening lines,
Skein after ſkein celeſtial tints unfold,
And all the ſilken tiſſue ſhines with gold.

Galanthus Nivalis, Snow-drop, ſix males one female, is introduced as a delicate and ſprightly lady, playing amidſt a wintery ſcene of ſilent floods, white hills, and glittering meadows. She chides the tardy Spring, and commands the Weſt Wind to ſtretch his folded pinions. She awakens the hoarſe Cuckow in his gloomy cavern, calls the wondering Dormouſe from his temporary grave; bids the mute Redbreaſt enliven the budding groves, and the plighted Ringdove coo. The Redbreaſt, however, is not mute amid the hybernal ſilence of nature, he warbles on the hoary ſpray.

Bellis

Bellis Prolifera, Hen and Chicken Daiſy, next becomes an affectionate matron, ſurrounded by her happy infants. Their childiſh ſports, with the inſects of the advanced Spring, and with the harebells and primroſes, form a domeſtic ſcene of tender and lively intereſt. In the courſe of it a compound epithet for the Snail brings that reptile inſtantly to the eye:

Admire his eye-tipp'd horns and painted mail;

alſo, by the adverb, pauſing, "the pauſing "butterfly," is that gay inſect recalled to us on it's airy evolutions. Venus and her Loves making arrows for Cupid in Vulcan's forge, is given as a ſimile to that ſcene; if ſimile it may be called which ſimilitude has none. However, the mechaniſm of bow and arrow-making is preſented with very amuſing preciſion.

Evidently to ſupport a ſplendid preluſive deſcription of Matlock, and the theory of the

the warmth of it's fountain proceeding from internal volcano, is the aquatic plant, the Fucus, introduced, which, we are told, ſoon appears in all baſins that contain water. The Fucus is repreſented as a beauteous youth, who bathes his fair fore-head in the ſtreaming fountain. The ſcriptural Angel who ſhook his plumes over the pool of Bethesda, illuſtrates the Fucus, preſiding over the ſalubrious ſprings of Matlock. This ſimile has much propriety, ſince Dr. Prieſtley informs us that "great quantities of pure dephlogiſticated "air are given up in water at the points "of the Fucus, particularly in the ſun-"ſhine, and that hence it contributes to "preſerve the water in reſervoirs from "becoming putrid."

Trapa, four males one female, another aquatic plant, comes before us; thus,

> Amphibious Nymph, from Nile's prolific bed
> Emerging Trapa, lifts her pearly head.

Fair

Fair glows her virgin cheek and modeſt breaſt,
A panoply of ſcales deforms the reſt;
Her quivering fins and panting gills ſhe hides,
But ſpreads her ſilver arms upon the tides;
Slow as ſhe ſails, her ivory neck ſhe laves,
And ſhakes her golden treſſes o'er the waves.
Charm'd round the Nymph, in circling gambols glide
Four Nereid forms, or ſhoot along the tide;
Now, all as one, they riſe with frolic ſpring,
And beat the wondering air on humid wing;
Now all deſcending plunge beneath the main,
And laſh it's foam with undulating train;
Above, below, they wheel, retreat, advance,
In air and ocean weave the mazy dance;
Bow their quick heads, and point their diamond eyes,
And twinkle to the ſun with ever changing dyes.

By this picture we are reminded of the figure of Sin at the gates of hell.

The one ſeem'd woman to the waiſt, and fair,
But ended foul in many a ſcaly fold,
Voluminous and vaſt!

MILTON's Paradiſe Loſt.

The enſuing transformation conveys us from the flat ſhores of the Nile to the baſe of the Andes. The plant is the Ocymum Salinum,

Salinum, Saline Baſil, two males two females. She is complimented with chaſtity as having but one lover. Her ſituation preſents a fine landſcape, and her form is arrayed in every feminine and modeſt attraction. The ſpray of ocean bathes her delicate limbs, uncurls her amber-hued treſſes, and encruſts her perſon with ſaline films, through which, as from amidſt a ſhrine of cryſtal, her beauty beams. To this ſaline plant belongs a note extremely worth the attention of the reader, ſince it contains an opinion of univerſal medical importance, from one of the moſt diſcerning phyſicians which perhaps the world has produced. It relates to the, by him, ſuppoſed pernicious effect of too free indulgence in that moſt agreeable of all the artificial taſtes, the love of ſalt with our food. The transformation of the Ocymum Salinum brought to the Poet's memory the unfortunate wife of Lot, whoſe ſtory is here

here told with great and pathetic beauty. Herſelf and huſband are compared to Orpheus and Eurydice, to Æneas and Creuſa. The ſtory concludes with a fine verſification of the ſcriptural picture of the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah. Perhaps it will be found ſomewhat inferior to Maſon's paraphraſe of the deſolation of Babylon. The reader will compare the paſſages, and judge for himſelf.

BOTANIC GARDEN.

Oft the lone Pilgrim, that his road forſakes,
Marks the wide ruins and the ſulphur'd lakes;
On mouldering piles, amid aſphaltic mud,
Hears the hoarſe Bittern where Gomorrah ſtood;
Recalls th' unhappy pair, with blind eye,
Leans on the cryſtal tomb, and breathes the ſilent ſigh.

MASON'S ODE ON THE FATE OF TYRANNY.

Where yon proud City ſtood
Now ſpreads the ſtagnant flood;
And there the Bittern in the ſedge ſhall lurk,
Moaning

Moaning with ſullen ſtrain,
While ſweeping o'er the plain,
Deſtruction ends her work.

Arum, of the claſs Gynandria, or maſculine ladies, becomes an Amazon, in the modern military garb, and it's appendages. Dejanira exchanging her diſtaff for the lion-ſpoils of her mighty lover, illuſtrates the Haram in a beautiful poetic picture.

The mule-flower, produced from the union of the Dianthus Superbus, Proud Pink, and the Caryophillus, Clove, produces, in the transformation of it's parent flowers, a whimſical but highly ingenious compariſon to the Perſian fable of the amours of the Nightingale and the Roſe. With romantic, but exquiſite fancy is this amour, and it's beautifully-monſtered offspring, made out. That curious plant, the Chundali Borrum, whoſe hiſtory and ſtrange habits are deſcribed in a note to the paſſage, is preceded by an African landſcape of ſublime features, beneath the rage of the Summer Solſtice,

Solſtice, and the poiſonous breath of the Harmattan, the only gale that flits over the tawny hills. Gaſping panthers are rolling in the duſt, and dying ſerpents are writhing in foamy folds; the woods on Atlas, blaſted by the heats, and the waters of the Gambia ſhrinking in their channels; Ocean rolling to land his ſick ſhoals, and Contagion ſtalking along the ſhore. Amid the ſultry waſte riſes the graceful nymph, Chunda, with her brow unturbaned, and with looſened zone. Her ten lovers are employed in mitigating for their fair miſtreſs the ardors of the climate, with the umbrella and the fan.

Of equal excellence, a Greenland picture contraſts, in the utmoſt poſſible extreme, the preceding landſcape. A dayleſs horizon, ſtreaming with the milky light of the Aurora Borealis, and all the white mountains gleaming to the moon; Bears ſtalking ſlowly over the printed ſnows; and vaſt

ribs of ice, burſting with the noiſe of loudeſt thunder. Then is ſhown the vernal diſſolution of this ſcene, beneath the riſing of the pale, ſix-months day; and the Muſchus, Coral-Moſs, in the form of an Arctic-regioned lover, awakens his Fair One, and deſcribes the ſymptoms of returning Spring.

The lake and ſea-plant, Æga, Conferva Ægagropila, is next introduced by this beautiful line,

Night's tinſel beams on ſmooth Loch-Lomond dance.

Where the charms of poetic ſound are felt, *that* is one of the lines which, after peruſal, takes poſſeſſion of the memory, and lingers on the ear. We are told, in a note, that this vegetable is found looſe in many lakes; that it is of a globular form, from the ſize of a walnut to that of a melon; does not adhere to any thing, but rolls from one part of the lake to the other. Here it becomes a fair maid, ſitting on the banks of Loch-Lomond,

Lomond, expecting her lover to ſwim to her from the centre of the water, and exploring, with anxious eyes, every paſſing wave. Since a number of aquatic plants had been previouſly humanized, it is probable *this* is indebted for ſuch diſtinction to the inclination of the Poet to retell the celebrated ſtory of Hero and Leander, after Ovid. As a ſimile it is perfectly comparative to the deſcribed ſituation and ſolicitude of Ægа. Dr. Darwin was conſcious of his rarely-equalled talent in deſcriptive ſtory; of his power to bring objects full and diſtinct on the reader's eye, by attitudes, looks, and employments, peculiar to their ſituation. Ovid ſays, Hero hung her lamp in a tower which overlooked the Helleſpont, that her lover, as he ſwam acroſs the flood, might ſee to ſteer his courſe by it's light. The art of glaſs-making, unknown in thoſe times, the danger of the lamp being blown out muſt have been

imminent. It is therefore natural that Hero ſhould aſſiduouſly ſtrive to guard it from the wind. Of that picturesque circumſtance Ovid did not avail himſelf. Our modern Bard has been happier.

So, on her ſea-girt tower, fair Hero ſtood
At parting day, and mark'd the daſhing flood,
While high in air, the glimmering rocks above,
Shone the bright lamp, the pilot-ſtar of love.
With robe out-ſpread, the waving flame behind,
She kneels, and guards it from the riſing wind;
Breathes to her Goddeſs * all her vows, and guides
Her bold Leander o'er the duſky tides;
Wrings his wet hair, his briny boſom warms,
And claſps her daring lover in her arms.

The charm of appropriation, as evinced in the third couplet of the above paſſage, exiſts only with the genuine Poet. Mere tuneful verſifiers know nothing of it, they reſt in general deſcription, and general deſcription has been long ſince exhauſted.

* Hero was a Prieſteſs of Venus.

Genius

Genius knows this; he ſeizes the peculiar circumſtance of the ſituation; pours all his ſtrength and light upon that, and leaves to the reader to conceive the *whole* by that diſtinct and luminous *part*; but for which, the ſcene would paſs unimpreſſive over the mind of the examiner, and probably in no hour of recollection return to it again.

The Truffle, a well known fungus, which never appears above ground, now meets our attention as a fine lady, married to a Gnome, ſtretched on beds of ſilvery aſbeſtos, beneath a grand ſubterranean palace; ſoothed by the muſic of the Eolian ſtrings, which make love to tender Echoes in the circumjacent caves; while Cupids hover round and ſhake celeſtial day from their bright lamps. It muſt be confeſſed that the Empreſs of this proud palace has not the claim of birthright to her ſplendor.

This perſonification is ſucceeded by that of Caprifica, Wild Fig, as a Nymph who

ſlumbers away her life on a downy couch. She is betrothed to a Sylph. Her awakening is compared to that of the inſect in a nut, and to a young linnet on the inſtant of it's firſt flight from the neſt. Caprifica ſtrikes a taliſman, and her airy huſband flies to her on the wings of a gnat. This flight is painted with laviſh play of fancy; it's ſwiftneſs is compared to that of the electric aura; it's impatient conſtancy to that of the polar needle. The Byſſus of the northern ſhores, which floats on their ſeas by day, and is found in their caverns, we ſee uſhered to our notice by a ſublime poetic picture of Fingall's Cave, of which Pennant's Tour to the Hebrides contains an engraving. The male and female of this vegetable become a Youth and Maid of thoſe regions, purſuing their amorous voyage by night, in a boat with green ſails, and lighted to their cave by the ſtar of Venus.

Conferva

Conferva Polymorpha, found on the Engliſh ſhores, from the changeful appearance of the ſubſtance, is termed a Proteus Lover, and is repreſented after that fable. Beneath this fancy we ſee him a Dolphin, a ſpotted Pard, a Swan; and traits of the manners of each of thoſe animals give poetic value to the transformations.

Adonis, many males many females in the ſame flower. Here is the final metamorphoſis of this great work of Imagination. The multifarious florets in each individual flower of that ſpecies, are made to aſſume the human figure, and to become a band of libertine lovers, who plight their promiſcuous hymeneals. To them is compared that licentious inſtitution, the Areoi of Otaheite, as recorded in Cook's Voyages.

And now the Muſe of Botany diſmiſſes her miniſters, and cloſes her inchantments, thus:

Here ceas'd the Goddeſs. O'er the ſilent ſtrings
Applauding Zephyrs ſwept their fluttering wings;
Enraptur'd Sylphs aroſe in murmuring crowds,
To air-wove canopies and pillowy clouds;
Each Gnome, reluctant ſought his earthly cell,
And each bright floret cloth'd her velvet bell.
Then, on ſoft tiptoe, Night, approaching near,
Hung o'er the tuneleſs lyre his ſable ear;
Gemm'd with bright ſtars the ſtill, etherial plain,
And bade his nightingales repeat the ſtrain.

Theſe laſt verſes drop the curtain, with ſerene dignity, over a brilliant little world of Genius and it's creations. The paſſage may not poſſeſs the ſpirit and ſublimity which attach to a number of others in this diviſion. Probably the Poet remembered the plainneſs with which Homer, Virgil, and Milton, cloſed their Epics, and choſe to diffuſe over his farewell lines an emulous ſobriety. Perhaps the whole Canto, with all it's maſs of pictureſque elegance, has more fameneſs, leſs grandeur, leſs ſublimity, than any of it's predeceſſors in either part of this magnificent Poem.

It ſeems to bear that ſpecies and degree of inferiority to the three former Cantos, as the Loves of the Plants, conſidered as an whole, bears to the ſublimer firſt part, the Economy of Vegetation; where we find imperſoniſed each various elementary property of Creation, as a race of miniſtrant Beings, endowed with ſcientific intelligence and benevolent powers. They riſe before us, the Handmaids of Nature, ordained to watch over all her operations and productions, on earth and beneath it; in air and in ocean; as Nature herſelf appears in the ſemblance of the Goddeſs of Botany.

Perhaps it would have been better if her proper and general name, Nature, had been aſſigned to her in the Economy of Vegetation, and the botanic title been reſerved excluſively for the Muſe in the Second Part, who records the transformations and the loves of the Plants and Flowers. In that caſe,

eaſe, to her alſo would have been reſigned the floral car and it's gay deſcent, and a vehicle of graver magnificence ſupplied it's place to the "Mighty mother," immortal Nature. Nymph, or Goddeſs of Botany, implies empire only over the vegetable part of creation; while, in the Economy of Vegetation, ſhe preſides over the aſtronomic, electric, aerial, and mineralogic properties. Into ſo wide a field has the union of Philoſophy with Poetry conducted this daring Bard. The light of his imagination will ſhine with increaſing luſtre in the eyes of future generations, ſo long as diſcerning Taſte ſhall be the Veſtal to watch and ſupport it's fires.

Nor let it once be thought that any error in Dr. Darwin's poetic ſyſtem; any occaſional deviation from perfection in the plan, arrangement, or execution of this his complicated work, ought to prevent it's being conſidered as one of the richeſt effuſions

fuſions of the poetic mind, that has ſhed luſtre over Europe in the eighteenth century.

Human ability never did, and probably never will, produce an abſolutely perfect compoſition. The author of this memoir has, from infancy, ſeduloufly ſtudied and compared the writings of the diſtinguiſhed Bards of her nation, together with the beſt tranſlations of thoſe of Greece, Rome, and modern Italy. She has preſumed to deſcant upon what appeared to her the graces and defects of the Botanic Garden; induced by a conviction that the unbiaſſed mixture of candid objection with due praiſe, better ſerves the intereſt of every ſcience than blind unqualified encomium upon it's profeſſors. Hence, riſing Genius may be guarded againſt the betraying influence of enthuſiaſtic homage; which, charmed by general excellence, melts down particular defect in it's ſhining maſs. So doing, the inexperienced

inexperienced and ardent fancy is full as liable to adopt the faults as to attain the merits of the author it emulates.

By unprejudiced inveſtigation, that ſickly, partial, and faſtidious taſte which confines it's attention and it's praiſe to a few choſen and darling writers, may be induced to reflect, that if, after a juſt balance of beauty and defect, the firſt outweighs the latter in immenſe degree, then attention, love, and applauſe is due to that work as an whole, in which ſuch preponderance is found.

Poſterity, if not always, yet generally acts upon that fair principle in the meaſure of fame it allots, when the miſts of prejudice, from cauſes foreign to the intrinſic claims of an author, ſhall diſperſe. Thoſe compoſitions which, with a conſiderable degree of genius, are yet level to the comprehenſion of ordinary minds, immediately attain their full meaſure of celebration; but it is ſeldom that poetry of the higher orders

orders is exempt from thoſe miſts; it muſt ſtruggle through them into full and univerſal day.

The ſlowly-accumulating ſuffrages of thoſe diſcerning and generous readers who delight in fertile and daring Genius, will accumulate for the Botanic Garden, as they have for many other poems, whoſe early appreciation was dubious; whoſe celebration, during the life of their authors, was far from being uncontroverted. When that time ſhall come, the querulous and diſdainful tones of peeviſh prejudice will not venture to aſſail the ear of an admiring Nation, proud of it's diſtinguiſhed Sons. Then, however imperfection may ſtill be perceived in this as in all other works of bold imagination, it will be obſerved without acrimony, and with grateful delight in it's plenteous atonement.

No eminent Poet has ſo many paſſages which are every way exceptionable, as the

moſt

moſt eminent Poet that this, or perhaps any other nation has produced from the morning of Time, our great, our glorious Shakeſpeare.

CHAPTER VII.

BEFORE Dr. Darwin ſtood forth a candidate for the Delphic laurels, he was extremely alive to the beauties of poetic literature, as it roſe and expanded around him. No perſon could be more ready to diſcern and to praiſe it's graces; but, from the commencement of the Botanic Garden, the jealous ſpirit of authoriſm darkened his candor. When, with avowed delight in the poetic powers of Cowper's Taſk, the writer of theſe ſtrictures, in converſation with Dr. Darwin and Sir Brooke Boothby, aſked their opinion of that poem, each declared they could not read it through; each taxed it with egotiſm, with proſaiciſm, with a rough and ſlovenly ſtyle, and with utter

utter want of regular deſign. Perhaps thoſe cenſures, unbalanced by juſt praiſe, ſhould not, however, be imputed ſolely to unworthy jealouſy in either of thoſe gentlemen; certainly not to Sir Brooke, at any rate, who, with all his native brilliance of fancy, was never tenacious of the Muſes' favors. Both had always preferred rhyme to blank verſe, aſſerting that it better ſuited the nature of our language. Dr. Darwin had ever maintained a preference of Akenſide's blank verſe to Milton's; declared that it was of higher poliſh, of more claſſic purity, and more dignified conſtruction. This preference may fairly allow us to place his blindneſs to the charms of the Taſk to the ſcore of taſte ſomewhat enervated by too much refinement, rather than to foreneſs under rival reputation. A ſtill more ſcrupulous attachment to claſſic elegance attaches to the opinions of Sir Brooke, reſpecting Poetry. It was thence, doubtleſs,

leſs, that he became diſguſted by the plan-leſs wanderings of Cowper's Muſe, in her principal work, and by the occaſional roughneſs and proſaiciſm of it's ſtyle. Another prejudice in the minds of each was likely to have operated in producing this injuſtice to Cowper. Previous to the Taſk he had publiſhed poems in rhyme, into which they had probably looked. In thoſe poems, whatever ſtrength of thought may be found, the poetic eſſentials certainly are not, inharmonious as is their verſification; barren as they are of landſcape and picture, metaphor and imagery.

The author of the Taſk was more juſt to Darwin than he had been to that ſpirited, that intereſting, that often ſublime, though not faultleſs compoſition. About the year 1792, Mr. Cowper ſent Dr. Darwin a lively and pleaſing encomium in verſe upon the Botanic Garden. This agreeable eulogy juſtly ſays, no Poet who can refuſe to

beſtow a wreath on Darwin deſerves to obtain one for himſelf. It was accompanied by another poetic tribute from Mr. Hayley, of yet warmer praiſe and more brilliant grace.

Mr. Polwhele alſo addreſſed a fine ſonnet to Dr. Darwin on his Botanic Garden, who, by inſerting it in his work, proved that he thought highly of it's merit, and that he conſidered ſuch praiſe as genuine fame. The neglect of Mr. Polwhele's poetic writings is a diſgrace to the preſent period of Engliſh literature.

Our botanic Poet had in general no taſte for Sonnets, and particularly diſliked Milton's. The characteriſtic beauties of the legitimate ſonnet, it's nervous condenſation of idea, the graceful undulation of it's varied pauſe, which blends with the ſweetneſs of rhyme the dignity of blank verſe, were all loſt on Dr. Darwin, at leaſt from the time in which he entertained the deſign of becoming

coming a profeſſed poet. Abſorbed in the reſolve of bringing the couplet-meaſure to a degree of ſonorous perfection, which ſhould tranſcend the numbers of Dryden and Pope, he ſought to confine poetic excellence excluſively to that ſtyle.

"Deſiring much the letter'd world might own
"The countleſs forms of beauty only one."

From the time at which Dr. Darwin left Lichfield to reſide at Derby, on the irreſiſtible injunction of Love, the author of theſe memoirs will not attempt to trace more than the outline of his deſtiny, not poſſeſſing the means of giving it's interior parts with ſufficient preciſion.

The pen which on theſe leaves has purſued him through his aſcending day to it's meridian, may yet remark that Dr. Darwin's reputation as a poet firſt emanated from Derby, though his delphic *inſpirations* commenced at Lichfield; that as a phyſician his renown ſtill increaſed as time

rolled on, and his mortal life declined from it's noon. Patients reſorted to him, more and more, from every part of the kingdom, and often from the Continent. All ranks, all orders of ſociety, all religions leaned upon his power to ameliorate diſeaſe, and to prolong exiſtence. The rigid and ſternly pious, who had attempted to renounce his aid from a ſuppoſition that no bleſſing would attend the preſcriptions of a ſceptic, ſacrificed, after a time, their ſuperſtitious ſcruples to their involuntary conſciouſneſs of his mighty ſkill.

Wealth muſt have flowed in rapidly beneath employment of unprecedented extent, at leaſt in any country practitioner; and from the large ſums for which he ſold the copy-right of his writings, poetic and philoſophic. The ſweet temper and benevolence of that long adored wife, for whoſe ſake he had changed his ſphere of action; the numerous young family which roſe

and

and bloomed around him, rendered the Lares of his hearth not leſs auſpicious to Darwin than he had found the gifts of Fortune and the voice of Renown. His ſon Eraſmus, by the former wife, had ſettled at Derby nearly as ſoon as himſelf went thither, and in the profeſſion of the law obtained conſiderable practice, with fair reputation. The talents and virtues of his youngeſt ſon, by the firſt marriage, were making every promiſe of that proſperity which has ſince been amply fulfilled.

The Zoonomia, of ſo much elder birth than the Botanic Garden, ſuffered her poetic younger ſiſter to precede her on their entrance into the world of letters, and did not herſelf appear till the year 1794. Of the Zoonomia ſufficient has been ſaid in the former part of this biography, conſidering the writer's limited powers to ſpeak of it's excellences and defects.

About thirteen or fourteen years after

Dr. Darwin's ſecond marriage, the Miſs Parkers, his relations, opened a female boarding-ſchool at Aſhbourn in Derbyſhire. To the education of thoſe ingenious and good young women he had paid ſome general attention, and had ſedulouſly and warmly, by recommendation and by other means, exerted himſelf to ſerve them. To promote the ſucceſs of their undertaking he publiſhed, on it's commencement, a ſmall tract on Female Education. The preciſe time of it's appearance is not recollected. The compoſition was by no means worthy of Dr. Darwin's exalted abilities. It's ſubject cannot be ſuppoſed to have employed much of his conſideration.

The ſyſtem of his whole life on that theme had been at war with all ſort of reſtraint on the time, the amuſements, and the diet of children. Irony was the only corrective weapon he had ever uſed to his own.

own. The docility of them all, and the talents and good qualities of his three eldeſt ſons, one, alas! cut off in the dawn of manhood and of fame, and the happy proſpects of the other two, had confirmed his diſdain of inceſſant attention to young people. He always ſaid, "If you would "not have your children arrogant, con- "ceited, and hypocritical, do not let them "perceive that you are continually watch- "ing and attending to them; nor can you "keep that perpetual watch *without* their "perceiving it. Inſpire them with a diſ- "dain of meanneſs, falſehood, and promiſe- "breaking; but do not try to effect this "purpoſe by precept and declamation, but, "as occaſion ariſes, by expreſſed contempt "of ſuch as commit thoſe faults, whether "it be themſelves or others. Teach them "benevolence and induſtry by your own "example, for children are emulous to "acquire the habits of advanced life, and

"attach to them an idea of dignity and "importance."

Perhaps, if Dr. Darwin had to this incomplicate and ſo eaſily practicable ſyſtem, added the inſpiration of religion by the ſame means, viz. expreſſed contempt for impiety, and daily example of grateful devotion, it would better anſwer the end of making wiſe and good men and women, than all the laboured Treatiſes on Education which have, of late years, been poured from the preſs; Treatiſes ſo univerſally read, ſo ſeldom, if ever, even in the ſlighteſt degree, reduced to practice! In truth they muſt be found impracticable, inconſiſtent as they are with the eſtabliſhed habits of ſociety. Obedience to their directions muſt devote every preſent generation, at leaſt the maternal part of every preſent generation, to preparing the future. Every mother muſt be wholly abſorbed in word-watching, and look-watching, and all this by *book*."

Yet

Yet was Dr. Darwin aware that theſe voluminous receipts to make human angels; or to make practical philoſophers of every boy and girl in the higher and middle claſſes of life, were too popular for him, without ſacrificing the deſign of his Tract, to bring againſt them his own conciſer plan; which, if rational, does away the utility of them all. His little work could not ſerve Miſs Parkers if it combated the educating metaphyſicians and their unobeying admirers. Avoiding ſuch combat, his Treatiſe would certainly call the attention of the neighbourhood to the ſeminary for which it was written. Some good rules for promoting the health of growing children will be found on it's pages, and they promiſed unfeed attention from it's author to the diſeaſed in that ſchool. On the whole, however, it is a meagre work, of little general intereſt, thoſe rules excepted, and with an odd recommendation of certain

novels

novels of no eminence, to the perusal of young people. That was one of those follies of the wife, which daily present themselves to our surprised attention.

In the year 1791 a splendid archery-meeting was held at Drakelow in Staffordshire, the seat of Sir Nigel Gresley. Miss Susan Sneyd *, of Belmont, was distinguished by her skill and success in the contest of that day. Honoured by Dr. Darwin's celebration, her name and her unerring arrow, are on permanent record. The verses he wrote on that occasion appeared in the Derby paper anonymously. There were people who pretended to be judges of verse, and yet were in doubt concerning their author. Before Dr. Darwin acknowledged them, they were attributed to various versifiers; and when the writer of this Tract, who saw the Darwinian stamp on the lines at one glance, declared they must be his,

* Now Mrs. Broughton.

her

her aſſertion was repeatedly combated, as if the peculiar ſtyle and manner of his muſe were not inſtantly apparent.

ON A TARGET AT DRAKELOW.

With ſylvan bow, on Drakelow's ſhadowy green,
Arm'd like Diana, trod the Cyprian Queen.
O'er her fair brow the beamy-creſcent ſhone,
And ſtarry ſpangles glitter'd round her zone;
Love's golden ſhafts her ſnow-white ſhoulders preſs'd,
And the fring'd ribbon croſs'd upon her breaſt.

With careleſs eye ſhe view'd the central ring,
Stretch'd her white arms, and drew the ſilken ſtring!
Mute wonder gaz'd the brazen ſtuds betwixt;
Full in the boſs the flying arrow fix'd!
Admiring circles greet the victor-fair,
And ſhouts of triumph rend the breezy air;
Trent, with loud echoes thrills the flowery grounds,
And Burton's towers return applauſive ſounds.

The graceful Huntreſs eyes the gaudy grove,
And bends again th' unerring bow of Love.
Now guard your hearts, with playful malice cries,
And wing'd with ſmiles the ſhining arrow flies;
With random aim the dazzled crowd ſhe wounds,
The quiver'd heroes ſtrow the velvet grounds;

Beau

Beau after beau expiring, prints the plain,
And Beauty triumphs o'er the archer train.

Now, with light bound, ſhe mounts her wreathed car,
Rolls her blue eyes, and waves her golden hair.
Fond youths bow homage as the wheels proceed,
Sigh as they gaze, and call the goddeſs, SNEYD!

There are beautiful lines in this little compoſition, but it is not faultleſs. The fourth and fifth couplet form the moſt ſtriking and elegant picture which poetry can exhibit of a graceful young woman employed in arrow-ſhooting. The epithet *careleſs* has the accuſtomed felicity of this author, in giving character to his portraits; ſince it implies that perfect conſciouſneſs of ſkill which precludes all ſtrain and effort of attitude, ſo prejudicial to grace! In theſe verſes Miſs Sneyd is deſcribed as ſending the arrow from the yew, as Dryden makes Cleopatra caſt from her eyes the darts of Love, on her voyage down the Cydnus;

As

As if ſecure of all Beholders' hearts,
Neglecting ſhe might take them.

The metaphoric ſhooting which ſucceeds to acclamations for the fair-one's victory, had perhaps better have been omitted. "Beau after beau," ſounds equivocally to the *ear*, in a ſcene thronged with bows and arrows; beſides, beau is in itſelf an effeminate and uncharacteriſtic title for a number of young men in the uniform of Woodmen, and in manly ſport with a weapon, dignified by it's ancientry, and by which Britons of old not only ſlew the wild boar and the ſtag, but repelled their foes when warriors cried aloud in the battle,

Draw, Archers, draw your arrows to the head!

There is alſo ſomewhat too much ſplendor in the departure of the Conquereſs, for why ſhould her vehicle be wreathed? A ſilver arrow, and not a garland, is the coſtume of archery reward. However, the final couplet

is

is elegant; the eulogy closing with the name of it's subject has an happy effect.

Soon after the death of that variously-charming Poet, Mason, Dr. Darwin wrote an Epitaph which he designed should be engraven on his monument. We may be certain, however, that it has not there been inscribed. As an inscription for an urn in a garden or grove, alter a few of the lines for that purpose, and the verses are excellent, though, from being utterly without religious hope or trust, they are improper for a tomb-stone.

FOR THE MONUMENT OF THE REV. W. MASON, BY DR. DARWIN.

These aweful mansions of the honor'd Dead
Oft shall the Muse of Melancholy tread;
The wreck of Virtue and of Genius mourn,
And point, with pallid hand, to Mason's urn.
Oft shall she gather from his garden bowers*
Fictitious foliage and ideal flowers;

* Alluding to the Poem, English Garden.

Weave

Weave the bright wreath, to worth departed juſt,
And hang unfading chaplets on his buſt;
While pale Elfrida, bending o'er his bier,
Breathes the ſoft ſigh and ſheds the graceful tear;
And ſtern Caractacus, with brow depreſs'd,
Claſps the cold marble to his mailed breaſt.
In lucid troops ſhall choral Virgins throng,
With voice alternate chaunt their Poet's ſong,
And, O! in golden characters record
Each firm, immutable, immortal word!

Thoſe laſt two lines from the final chorus of Elfrida, admirably cloſe this tribute to the memory of him who ſtands ſecond to Gray as a lyric Poet; whoſe Engliſh Garden is one of the happieſt efforts of didactic verſe; containing the pureſt elements of horticultural taſte; dignified by ſentiments of freedom and virtue; rendered intereſting by epiſode, and given in thoſe energetic and undulating meaſures which render blank verſe excellent; whoſe unowned ſatires, yet certainly his, the Heroic Epiſtle to Sir William Chambers, and it's Poſtſcript, are

at

at once original in their ſtyle, harmonious in their numbers, and pointed in their ridicule; whoſe Tragedies are the only pathetic Tragedies which have been written in our language upon the ſevere Greek model. The Samſon Agoniſtes bears marks of a ſtronger, but alſo of an heavier hand, and is unqueſtionably leſs touching than the ſweet Elfrida; and the ſublime Caractacus.

Since theſe pages were in the preſs, an Epitaph on General Wolfe firſt met their author's eye in a collection of manuſcript poetry; and it bears Dr. Darwin's ſignature. Perfectly in his manner, ſhe cannot doubt it's authenticity; elſe the names of deceaſed people of eminence are ſo often affixed to compoſitions they never framed, that we ought to look jealouſly at all which do not carry to the mind of the reader internal evidence of their imputed origin. But for ſuch evidence the enſuing lines had found no place on theſe pages.

ON

ON THE DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE.

Thy trembling hills, Quebec, when Victory trod,
Shook her high plume, and wav'd her banner broad;
Saw Wolfe advance; heard the dire din of War,
And Gallia's genius ſhrieking from afar,
With fatal haſte th' aſtoniſh'd Goddeſs flew,
To weave th' immortal chaplet for his brow.
Cypreſs ſhe gather'd with the ſacred bays,
And weav'd the aſp of Death among the ſprays.
They fly! they fly! th' expiring Hero cried,
Hung his wreath'd head; thank'd the kind Gods, and
died.

Will the reader again extend indulgence to the ſpirit of authoriſm, tenacious beneath a ſenſe of recent injury? As in the courſe of this little work it's writer has claimed her own verſes from the ſplendid poem ſhe analyſed, ſo will he now permit her to diſclaim other verſes, that, by ſingular effrontery (her exiſtence conſidered) have been printed ſince, with her name affixed. In the Spring 1803, ſhe ſent theſe memoirs to Mr. Johnſon for publication; ſhe now, January 1804, but firſt diſ-

covered an illegitimate Sonnet in one of the Gentleman's Magazines for Auguſt or September laſt, with her ſignature at full length. It is addreſſed to Mr. Dimond, of whoſe poetic exiſtence ſhe had never heard, and it praiſes a poem of his which ſhe has never ſeen. One line of the forged ſonnet begins, "Bright Dimond," thus making a miſerable pun from an unfortunate name; and the writer's ear was defective enough to induce his alliterating with the harſh *th* thus,

Young joys awake in many a *th*rilling *th*rong;

which laſt words form completely the Gander's hiſs.

She finds alſo that theſe alternately-rhyming ſtanzas, which call themſelves *ſonnet*, are interpolated, and given as her's, in the 6th Vol. of Public Characters, recently publiſhed, ſee page 554 of that Vol. They cloſe anecdotes of her, that have been chiefly collected from previous tracts in the monthly publications. All are

of

of much too partial deſcription; and ſtrangely indeed is the talent of ſinging agreeably attributed to her, who, conſcious of total want of voice, never attempted to ſing in her whole life. Amid theſe lateſt anecdotes a ſtanza is quoted from her "Ode to General Elliot on his return from "Gibraltar," and the quotation has two groſs miſprints, "*induſtrious* ſoldier" for *illuſtrious* ſoldier, and "honour *to* the lap of "peace," inſtead of, honour *on* the lap of peace.

When this ſonnet-forgery was contrived, it's writer forgot that ſhe, whoſe name was affixed to it, had, in her Preface to the Centenary of legitimate Sonnets, which ſhe publiſhed in 1798, denied to three alternately rhyming ſtanzas, cloſing with a couplet, all right to the name of that peculiar and ſtrict order of verſe. It was therefore moſt unlikely that ſhe ſhould herſelf aſſume it for fourteen lines, written on the feeble model which ſhe had reprobated.

But it is time to resume a more interesting subject.

The close of the year 1799 brought a severe trial to the stoical fortitude of Dr. Darwin. From the period of his second marriage all had been sunshine in his fortune, his fame, and domestic connexions; but then a storm descended upon his peace; unforeseen, sudden, dreadful! His eldest son, Mr. Darwin, so prosperously situated, without one adequate cause for even transient affliction, became the victim of secret and utter despair. It had often been observed that any more than ordinary recurrence of professional business perplexed and oppressed him. A demand was made that he should arrange and settle some complicated accounts, which a disposition to procrastinate had too long delayed. A disposition which is always, in a greater or less degree, punished by it's consequences. Though a remote, it is the most frequent cause

cauſe of ſuicide, accumulating debts till their entanglement becomes inextricable, their weight too heavy to be borne. But in this caſe it had produced only an accumulation of buſineſs. From the neceſſity of entering upon it Mr. Darwin had ſeemed to ſhrink with ſo much dejection of ſpirit as to induce his partner to intreat that he would leave the inſpection ſolely to his management. He declined the propoſal, ſaying, in a faint voice, that it was impoſſible.

This was on a December evening, cold and ſtormy. The river Derwent, which ran at the bottom of his garden, was partially frozen. About ſeven o'clock he ſent his partner out of the way on buſineſs, real or pretended. Mr. Darwin was on the couch complaining of the head-ach. Soon after eight his partner returning found the parlour vacant. He went to Mr. D.'s upſtair apartment; vacant alſo: inquired

of the ſervants; they had not ſeen their maſter ſince this gentleman went out, an hour before. He waited a few minutes expecting his friend's return from the garden. Not appearing, a degree of apprehenſion ſeized his mind. He ran thither, and in the walk which leads to the river, he found Mr. Darwin's hat and neckcloth. Alarm was immediately given, and boats were ſent out. Dr. Darwin had been ſummoned. He ſtaid a long time on the brink of the water, apparently calm and collected, but doubtleſs ſuffering the moſt torturing anxiety. The body could not be found till the next day. When the Doctor received information that it was found, he exclaimed in a low voice, "Poor inſane coward!" and it is ſaid never afterwards mentioned the ſubject.

Mr. Darwin died in very good circumſtances, leaving an untainted reputation for probity and benevolence; beloved, reſpected,

ſpected, and mourned by all who knew him. He never married; had purchaſed a pretty eſtate near Derby, which, with all his other effects, he left to his father. The accounts, whoſe apprehended embarraſſment had proved fatal to him, were ſettled after his death to the ſatisfaction of all parties.

Though this unfortunate victim of cauſeleſs deſpondency had a gentle, ingenuous, and affectionate heart, he attained middle life without any known or ſuſpected attachment of the impaſſioned kind. There ſeemed a want of energy in his character, and too extreme a delicacy of feeling on the occurrence of every thing which was in the ſlighteſt degree repulſive. He had never loved buſineſs, and his attention to it appeared a force upon his inclinations. While his profeſſion was undetermined, he expreſſed a wiſh to go into the Church rather than the Law. That preference was repulſed

by paternal ſarcaſms upon it's indolence and imputed effeminacy. From infancy to his laſt day, Mr. Darwin had ſhrunk, with pained ſenſibility, from his father's irony. Probably from the leſs active, leſs ſcientific diſpoſition of Eraſmus, in compariſon with that of his brothers, Charles and Robert, Dr. Darwin had always appeared colder towards him than to his other children. Doubtleſs it was that inferior degree of attachment which made the leſſon of ſtoiciſm ſomewhat more practicable on this trying, this dire occaſion. It excited, however, univerſal ſurpriſe to ſee him walking along the ſtreets of Derby the day after the funeral of his ſon, with a ſerene countenance and his uſual cheerfulneſs of addreſs. This ſelf-command enabled him to take immediate poſſeſſion of the premiſes bequeathed to him; to lay plans for their improvement; to take pleaſure in deſcrib-

ing

ing thoſe plans to his acquaintance, and to determine to make it his future reſidence; and all this without ſeeming to recollect to how ſad an event he owed their poſſeſſion!

The folly of ſuffering our imagination to dwell on paſt and irretrievable misfortunes, and of indulging fruitleſs grief, he often pointed out, and always cenſured. He relied much on ſelf-diſcipline in that reſpect, and diſdained, from deference to what he termed the prejudices of mankind, to diſplay the outward ſemblance of unavailing ſorrow, ſince he thought it wiſdom to combat it's reality. On occaſions and ſubjects which he conſidered trivial, he profeſſed to indulge human prejudice; but whenever, by mock aſſent, he extended that indulgence, a ſlight ſatiric laugh and a gay diſdain lurking in his eye, counteracted the aſſumed coincidence. On circumſtances which touched

touched him nearly, he acted steadily upon his own principles.

And there were subjects out of himself on which he was always seriously and earnestly ingenuous. Politics was one. He hated war, and thought the motives few indeed, which could vindicate it's homicide, especially in this commercial and sea-defended country. That of forcing America into internal, unrepresented taxation, and of interfering, through jealousy of her principles, with the internal government of France, he utterly disapproved. The event of both those contests accomplished his prophecies, and justified his disapprobation.

Early in the year, 1800, Dr. Darwin published another large quarto volume, intitled, Phytologia, or the Philosophy of Agriculture and Gardening. The writer of these pages does not presume to speak her opinion of this production as an whole; the

the ſubject did not induce her to read it regularly. Incompetent therefore to declared opinion as her peruſal may have been, it has yet convinced her that in parts, at leaſt, it is highly ingenious. Dr. Darwin's conviction that vegetables are remote links in the chain of ſentient exiſtence, often hinted in the notes to the Botanic Garden, is here avowed as a regular ſyſtem. The Phytologia inſiſts that plants have vital organization, ſenſation, and even volition; and a number of inſtances are adduced, which ſeem firmly to ſupport the theory. Certainly thoſe appear to ſleep which cloſe their petals at ſun-ſet, and unfold them in the riſing day. Dr. Darwin tells us that plants poſſeſs low heat and cold blood, like winter-ſleeping animals, and like them continue the deſcending ſcale of exiſtence.

From this theory of vegetable ſenſation ſome good may proceed, and no evil can flow.

flow. If the affluent improver of his paternal or purchaſed domain, ſhall be impreſſed with it's belief, ſuch impreſſion muſt augment his pleaſure in attending to the ſuſtenance, the growth, and comfort of his trees, his grain, his ſhrubs, and his flowers. He will ſay to himſelf, "It is I "who enable this little world of vegetation, "by my care, attention, and kindneſs, to "ſmile upon the ſun, and baſk delighted "in it's rays." The labourer in the field and garden, aſſured that the grain and the plants he is cultivating will not only nurture his fellow creatures, but are *themſelves* capable of receiving comfort or diſcomfort while yet they grow on the earth, will thence feel an additional motive to become worthy of his hire. Every honeſt heart is gratified by the idea of contributing to the common ſtock of happineſs. It is an idea which produces ſelf-reſpect in the mind,

which,

which, when founded in benevolence, and not in haughtineſs, is the faireſt and moſt productive ſoil in which the virtues can grow, whether thoſe virtues be lowly and plain in ignorance and poverty, or heightened and refined by knowledge and affluence.

Of this theory, however, Dr. Darwin is neither the ſource, nor the firſt who drew the ſcattered hints of former philoſophers concerning it, into a regular ſyſtem. The ingenious and excellent Dr. Percival, of Mancheſter, preceded him in maintaining that ſyſtem from the preſs. Congeniality on it's ſubject between a mild, a temperate, and religious ſage, and a bold philoſopher of the modern ſchool, who poſſeſſed the eye of a lynx for nature's arcana, leave us little reaſon to doubt that it is veritable. Why ſhould we ſuppoſe the chain of exiſtence broken at the laſt, inert claſs of animals,

animals, ſince it's continuity is perfectly conſonant to the order of creation?

> The chain that leads from infinite to man,
> From man to nothing.
>
> NIGHT THOUGHTS.

The nouriſhment of plants is next conſidered with a view to their health and increaſe; and ingenious experiments are ſtated. The decompoſition of water is aſſerted to be one of the moſt important diſcoveries of modern ſcience. Thence was demonſtrated the immenſe proportion of oxygene or vital air, with which water is impregnated, in compariſon with air which is leſs pure. A plentiful ſupply of water abſolutely neceſſary to fertilize ſoil. The wiſdom aſſerted, and the means pointed out, of giving artificial and ſalutary moiſture to arid ſituations. On the contrary, where the ground is naturally too wet and ſwampy, the neceſſity of ſubterranean and ſuperficial drains is enforced.

Sudden

Sudden and violent ſhowers extremely detrimental, from their waſhing down the diffuſable and ſoluble parts of the ſoil into muddy rivers. It is obſerved, that every ſuch ſhower conveys through thoſe channels into the ſea, many thouſand pounds-worth of fertilizing matter, thus conſiderably diminiſhing the food of terreſtrial animals, however it may add to the ſuſtenance of the aqueous tribes. Great attention is neceſſary to counteract the miſchief of theſe impetuous and impelling rains, equally noxious to the dry ſoil and ſituation, as to thoſe which are irriguous. To ſuch end we are informed that all hills ſhould be ploughed horizontally, and not in aſcending and deſcending furrows; alſo, that ſloping fields of paſture-land might be laid in tranſverſe ridges and depreſſions. Thus the water of theſe partial inundations would remain ſome hours in the horizontal furrows of the ploughed hills, and in the

the tranſverſe hollows of inclined plains, that are graſs-land. Theſe little detaining reſervoirs muſt be a great advantage in parched ſituations, while in thoſe which are wet and ſpongy, they might be opened into each other by the ſpade ſo as to prevent that loſs of ſoil which muſt reſult from the downward ruſh and ſpeedy paſſing away of the temporary deluge.

The great waſte in towns and cities, of ſubſtances capable of being converted into manure, is obſerved and deplored; and in that reſpect the better police of China held up to imitation. The author alleges, that ſimilar practice in Europe would at once promote the purity and conſequent health of towns, and contribute to the economy and fertility of their ſurrounding countries. He explains the means of accompliſhing purpoſes ſo deſirable.

Here let the biographic pen arreſt it's courſe,

courſe, nor attempt to follow this penetrating and excurſive mind through the wide and complicated mazes of agricultural diſſertation. Returning back to the verge of this vaſt field of treaſured obſervation and ſcientific literature, the memorialiſt may be allowed to obſerve what never-ſlumbering attention to the operations of nature and the preſent ſtate of cultivation; what unwearied reſearch into the records of other philoſophers, this book evinces! A man of ſuch immenſe profeſſional engagements as Dr. Darwin, compoſing and publiſhing this work only, had built his lettered reputation upon no narrow or unſtable baſis. But when we conſider it as a brother-production to the Zoonomia, two large quartos, as bulky, as ſmall a type, and as crowded writing as the Phytologia; when we conſider alſo his ſplendid poetic work, with it's hoſt of philoſophic notes; there is ſurely no partiality to him, no want of

candor to others, in maintaining that it can only be from native littleneſs or acquired warp of mind, where the greatneſs and energy of Dr. Darwin's genius and knowledge are denied. Yet let it be remembered, that it is poetic eminence, not pre-eminence, which has here been demanded for his muſe. Superlative epithets have found no place in his eulogium on theſe pages; for their author remembers and reveres the exalted claims of his poetic predeceſſors and contemporaries of the eighteenth century. Incomparable, unrivalled, matchleſs, are terms of applauſe which can only be, with truth, applied to three men of genius in times paſt or preſent; to Shakeſpear as a dramatic poet; to Newton as a philoſopher; to Handel as a muſician; not to Homer, not to Milton, ſince they ſtand abreaſt with each other, and divide the epic palm. Perhaps, without treſpaſs on literary truth, Gray might

alſo

alſo be termed peerleſs, as a lyric poet, ſince he equals Pindar in the dignity of his language, in the ſublimity of his imagery, and in the interwoven morality, alternately aweful and tender; and ſince he choſe ſubjects ſo much more exalted than the Pindaric themes, for thoſe two great Odes which place him firſt at the goal of the Lyric Muſe. Their meaſures are magnificent and harmonious to the utmoſt power of the Engliſh tongue. Pindar could not carry that excellence higher in the Greek language; therefore if any ſuperiority remains to the ancient claſſic, reſpecting his metre, it muſt reſult from the more ſonorous tones of the Greek, not from tranſcendence of genius in it's great lyriſt, compared with the Britiſh poet. Whatever importance the faſhion of that period might attach to Pindar's themes, however mythologic and hiſtoric alluſion might give them auxiliar elevation, yet the foot-races

of children, though the ſons of princes, and the chariot-races of youthful heroes, poſſeſs no eternity of attraction compared to the ſubject of Gray's Progreſs of Poeſy, and of his Bard. For the firſt, the phyſical and moral powers of the muſes; their univerſal influence, in different degrees, in every clime; the three great ſeats of their empire, Greece, Italy, and England, Dramatic, Epic, and Lyric Poetry, ſupported in Britain by Shakeſpear, Milton, and Dryden.

For the ſecond, and ſtill greater Ode, the ſanguinary crime againſt the Muſes committed by an otherwiſe illuſtrious monarch, the ſuppoſed conſequences of that crime, a train of misfortunes to the remaining line of the Plantagenets; it's regal ſons,

Another and another gold-bound brow,

paſſing before us in the awful obſcurity, the "darkneſs viſible" of poetic prophecy; the acceſſion

acceſſion of another royal houſe, in which the rival roſes were entwined; the brilliant reign of it's virgin queen, who was to carry the proſperity and the renown of a great nation to it's utmoſt line; the day of poeſy, ſunk in eclipſe from the period of the maſſacre, riſing again with redoubled ſplendor in that epoch; the exultation of the Cambrian Bard who thus foreſees the reſtored glory of his art in the genius of him who ſung the fairy region, and by that of the mighty maſter of the ſock and buſkin; the continuance of that glory through future times by the Song of Eden, and the ſtrains of ſucceſſive warblers; the exultation cloſing by the plunge of the injured Bard amid Conway's deep and tumultuous flood! Can pedeſtrian ſpeed, and the dexterity of the whip and rein, by any effort of talent, be raiſed to the intrinſic grandeur of themes like theſe? Ah! when will our ſchools and univerſities, exchange

claſſical partiality for patriotiſm, and be-come juſt to the exalted merits of the Engliſh Poets? To that ſincere and ardent patriotiſm the author of theſe memoirs hopes will be remitted her tributary digreſſion to the fame of Gray.

Sunday, the eighteenth of April, 1802, deprived Derby and it's vicinity, and the encircling counties, of Dr. Darwin; the lettered world of his genius. During a few preceding years he had been ſubject to ſudden and alarming diſorders of the cheſt, in which he always applied the lancet inſtantly and freely; he had repeatedly riſen in the night and bled himſelf. It was ſaid that he ſuſpected *angina pectoris* to be the cauſe of thoſe his ſudden paroxyſms, and that it would produce ſudden death. The converſation which he held with Mrs. Darwin and her friend, the night before he died, gave colour to the report. In the preceding year he had a very dangerous illneſs.

illneſs. It originated from a ſevere cold caught by obeying the ſummons of a patient in Derby, after he had himſelf taken ſtrong medicine. His ſkill, his courage, his exertion, ſtruggled vehemently with his diſeaſe. Repeated and daring uſe of the lancet at length ſubdued it, but, in all likelihood, irreparably weakened the ſyſtem. He never looked ſo well after as before his ſeizure; increaſed debility of ſtep, and a certain wanneſs of countenance, awakened thoſe fears for him which great numbers felt who calculated upon his aſſiſtance when hours of pain and danger might come. It was ſaid, that during his illneſs he reproved the ſenſibility and tears of Mrs. Darwin, and bid her remember that ſhe was the wife of a philoſopher.

The public papers and magazines recorded, with tolerable accuracy, the nature of his final ſeizure; the converſation he held in the garden of his new reſidence, the

Priory, with Mrs. Darwin and her female friend; the idea which he communicated to them, that he was not likely to live to ſee the effect of thoſe improvements he had planned; Mrs. Darwin affectionately combating that idea by obſerving, that he looked remarkably well that evening; his reply that he had generally found himſelf in his beſt health a few days preceding his attacks; the ſpirits and ſtrength with which he aroſe the next morning at ſix to write letters; the large draught of cold butter-milk, which, according to his uſual cuſtom, he had ſwallowed. All theſe circumſtances early met the public eye; and, in the imperfect ſketches of his life which accompanied them, a ſtrange habit was imputed to Dr. Darwin, which preſents ſuch an exterior of idiot-ſeeming indelicacy that the author of this tract is tempted to expreſs her intire diſbelief of it's truth; viz. that his tongue was generally hanging out

out of his mouth as he walked along. She has often, of late years, met him in the ſtreets of Lichfield, alone and muſing, and never witneſſed a cuſtom ſo indecent. From the early loſs of his teeth he looked much older than he was. That loſs expoſes the tongue to view while ſpeaking, and Dr. Darwin's mouth certainly thus diſcloſed the ravages of time, but by no means in any offenſive degree.

It was the general opinion that a glaſs of brandy might have ſaved him for that time. It's effects would have been more powerful from his utter diſuſe of ſpirits; but ſuch was the abhorrence in which he held them, that it is probable no intreaties could have induced him to have ſwallowed a dram, though ſurely, on any ſudden chill of the blood, it's effect, ſo injurious on habitual application, might have proved reſtoring.

On that laſt morning, he had written one

one page of a very ſprightly letter to Mr. Edgeworth, deſcribing the Priory, and his purpoſed alterations there, when the fatal ſignal was given. He rang the bell, and ordered his ſervant to ſend Mrs. Darwin to him. She came immediately, with his daughter, Miſs Emma Darwin. They ſaw him ſhivering and pale. He deſired them to ſend directly to Derby for his ſurgeon, Mr. Hadley. They did ſo; but all was over before he could arrive.

It was reported at Lichfield, that, perceiving himſelf growing rapidly worſe, he ſaid to Mrs. Darwin, "My dear, you muſt "bleed me inſtantly." "Alas, I dare "not, leſt—" "Emma, will you? There "is no time to be loſt." "Yes, my dear "father, if you will direct me." At that moment he ſunk into his chair, and expired!

The body was opened, but it was ſaid the ſurgeons found no traces of peculiar diſeaſe;

diſeaſe; that the ſtate of the viſcera indicated a much more protracted exiſtence; yet thus, in one hour, was extinguiſhed that vital light which the preceding hour had ſhone in flattering brightneſs, promiſing duration; ſuch is often the "cunning "flattery of nature;" that light, which, through half a century, had diffuſed it's radiance and it's warmth ſo widely; that light, in which Penury had been cheered, in which Science had expanded; to whoſe orb Poetry had brought all her images; before whoſe influence Diſeaſe had continually retreated, and Death ſo often turned aſide his levelled dart!

Awful is the leſſon of ſuch an extinction; trebly awful in it's ſuddenneſs. Let no one ſay that it is not more awful than the ſimilar deſtiny of ordinary human beings; for the impreſſion made by unexpected, immediate, and everlaſting abſence, will be diffuſive, will be ſtrong, in proportion

tion to the abilities and uſefulneſs of thoſe who vaniſh at once from ſociety. We feel the ſolemn leſſon ſink deep into our hearts when minds ſo largely endowed and adorned, evince, in their fate, the truths uttered by that ſublime Poet *, who made the threats and the promiſes of the Goſpel the theme of his midnight ſtrains; and thus they admoniſh,

By nature's law, what muſt be, may be *now*;
There's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thought can riſe
Than man's preſumption on to-morrow's dawn?
Where is to-morrow?—In another world!
For numbers this is certain, the reverſe
Is ſure to none; and yet, on this perhaps,
This peradventure, infamous for lies,
As on a rock of adamant, we build;
Though every dial warns us as we paſs,
Portentous as the written wall, that turn'd,
O'er midnight bowls, the proud Aſſyrian pale!

Another, and the laſt poetic work of Dr. Darwin, is now in the preſs. The

* Dr. Young.

Temple

Temple of Nature. His memorialiſt, on theſe pages, has not ſeen a line of the compoſition. The curioſity of the ingenious muſt be ardently excited to view the ſetting emanation of this brilliant day-ſtar; they muſt hope that neither age, diſeaſe, nor the dread calamity he had endured, in December 1799, ſhed miſt or cloud upon it's rays.

Dr. Darwin died in his ſixty-ninth year.

This Tract is preſented to the Public beneath it's author's idea, that it may probably diſpleaſe two claſſes of readers, ſhould it attract their notice; the dazzled idolaters of the late Dr. Darwin, who will not allow that there were any ſpots in his ſun; and that much larger claſs, who, from party prejudice, religious zeal, or literary envy, or a combination of all thoſe motives, are unjuſt to his high claims; at leaſt as a Philoſopher and Poet. There is another claſs of readers, who, if theſe faithful records ſhall be honored by their peruſal, will

will feel gratified to ſee one diſtinguiſhed character of theſe times, neither varniſhed by partiality, nor darkened by prejudice. They muſt be conſcious that human beings, whatever may have been their talents, whatever their good qualities, are ſeldom found perfect, except on the pages of their eulogiſts; conſcious alſo, that, while the intellectual powers of the wife and the renowned, excite admiration, their errors may not leſs uſefully be contemplated as warnings, than their virtues as examples.

LICHFIELD,
April 13, 1803.

THE END.

T. Bensley, Printer, Bolt Court, Fleet Street.

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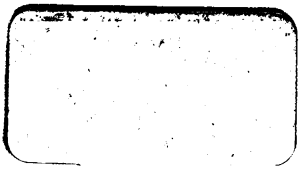
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